SUNDAY BIZ /B1 **ENTERTAINMENT**/ L1 **GLOBAL PINOY** /A27

Not like the poor, little rich girl: Vivienne Tan, Lucio Tan's daughter, works hard for the money to teach entrepreneurship to the youth.

IN Hollywood grab bag: Tom Cruise surprise guest at 'Devil Wears Prada' party in LA; Will Smith's son steals show; Jane Seymour caught up in Pacquiao fever

IMAGINE
John Lennon
Dec. 8, 1980

'Happy Slip:' Growing up Pinoy and wacky in America on the wonderful world wide web

Storm-lashed RP loses typhoon committee post

By Blanche S. Rivera

A TYPHOON COMMITTEE does not ride up storms or blow away international summits.

It is a committee of 14 countries in the World Meteorological Organiz-

STORM LASHED, A3

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, December 10, 2006 ★★ Vol. 22 / No. 2
inquirer.net/sunday

'Senlang' strengthens, tears into Samar, Leyte

By Inquirer Visayas and Inquirer Southern Luzon

TACLOBAN CITY—AS THOUGH THE DEVASTAtion of the past week were not enough, Storm "Senlang" strengthened into a typhoon early yesterday and caused massive power outages, landslides and floods in Leyte and Samar.

Packing maximum winds of 120 kilometers

BREAKING A1

GMA: Stop Con-ass now

STILL NO. 1 AT 21: The Inquirer had 21 reasons to celebrate its 21st anniversary on Friday. Though considerably subdued in deference to "Reming's" victims, a good time was had by all. Scene-watchers led by Vice President Noli de Castro dropping by from left, Charlie Rufino, PDI director; columnists Solita Monsod and Teresa P. Valdes, Marixi Prieto, board chair; Pat Garcia, treasurer; Jesse Andres, Mikhail Mateo, winner of the Guyito painting contest; Da Castro, Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, president/CEO, and Isagani Yambot, publisher

Cabinet in disarray over retreat

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THIS COMES DIRECT FROM the Palace.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had instructed her political affairs adviser Gabriel Claudio on Friday to "order" the lawmakers allied with her to drop the constituent assembly (Con-ass) as a means of changing the Constitution, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday.

The President's sudden withdrawal of support for Con-ass in the face of mounting opposition from Church and local government leaders appeared to have left her Cabinet in disarray.

Michael Defensor, the President's chief of staff and who is touted to be her "favorite Cabinet secretary," said Ms Arroyo's withdrawal of support for Con-ass should give "a dose of reality" to members of the Cabinet who had been going for broke about pushing this means of amending the Constitution.

Defensor refused to elaborate, but he was apparently referring to the Lakas clique in the Cabinet led by Ermita, Claudio, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and Press Secretary Ignacio Bunyi.

The clique was believed to have forced the resignation recently of Avelino Cruz as defense secretary.

Cruz had openly thrown his disdain for the people's initiative made of amending the Constitution that was actively being pushed by one of the leaders of the

CPRI, A14

Due to the deluge

of entries received for the contest "What did Eggie tell Lerry that made her laugh so hard?" we were unable to announce the winners as originally scheduled on Dec. 9, the INQUIRER's 21st anniversary. We ask for your indulgence and patience. Every entry is carefully read and evaluated by Eugenia "Eggie" Duran-Apostol, Lerry Jimenez-Magsanoc and Dennis Leung, product manager for circulation and readership of PDI marketing. We want to give every entry as much time as you, dear readers, gave us to "dare" answer the question of the INQUIRER. Winners for 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes will be announced next Sunday. Until then, know that all your answers are appreciated and applauded.

JDV offers Con-con; sets deadline

By Michael Lim Ubac

FACED WITH MOUNTING PUBLIC anger, President Macapagal-Arroyo's allies in the House of Representatives yesterday all but abandoned their plan to convene a constituent assembly (Con-ass) to revise the Constitution themselves after she withdrew her support for it. (See box for story.)

The decision to retreat from their announced timetable of convening a Con-ass soon marked the second defeat Malacañang and its backers had suffered in less than two months in their bid to overhaul the 19-year-old Charter and set up a parliamentary government with Ms Arroyo also at the helm.

Speaker Jose de Venecia said he and the majority in the House of Representatives "are now prepared" to call for a constitutional convention (Con-con) where the job of rewriting the Constitution would be carried out by a body of elected delegates.

De Venecia, in a phone interview with the INQUIRER, denied that planned nationwide protests against Con-ass next week had spurred the House majority's change of plans.

"Why should it be a defeat? We are trying to unite the nation," the Speaker said, when asked if the House majority's apparent turnaround in calling for a Con-con amounted to a political defeat for his group.

De Venecia made the new pitch for a Con-con at a press conference in Dusit Hotel in Makati City that turned rowdy after a militant leader opposed to Con-ass and a newspaper columnist nearly came to blows. (See story on Page A6.)

The House majority's earlier decision

JDV, A6

Senators dismiss Speaker's ultimatum

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENATE PRESIDENT MANUEL Villar yesterday dismissed Speaker Jose de Venecia's 72-hour deadline for the senators to agree to a constitutional convention (Con-con), saying the House leader was only looking for a "face-saving" exit after the failure of his Malacañang-backed move to rewrite the Constitution.

Villar said that President Macapagal-Arroyo and her allies had apparently realized the extent of public outrage against their efforts to revise the Charter through a constituent assembly.

Villar said that the senators would discuss privately tomorrow the House proposal to hold the Con-con after the May 2007 elections but he rejected De Venecia's ultimatum that the Senate should approve a resolution to that effect within the next three days.

"It's not proper for them to give the Senate a deadline. Nobody can impose a deadline on the Senate," he said.

"I think the President realized the extent of the public backlash they were creating. She wants to pursue (Charter change) but not to the extent of risking her presidency," Villar said in the interview.

SENATORS, A5

IN YOUR FACE: During the emotionally charged De Venecia presscon on Saturday, activist Renato Constantino Jr. (left) and Inquirer business columnist Victor Agustin nearly come to blows after the latter threw a glass of water at the former. (Story on page A6)

Cebuanos' debut party on world stage on hold

By Fernando del Mundo

CEBU CITY—WHETHER IT WAS BEcause of a gathering storm, a terrorist threat or political fallout, the Cebuanos' coming-out party to welcome foreign leaders nearly half a millennium after a local warrior drove away foreign invaders is over—at least for now.

Hours after organizers announced on Friday the postponement to January of next week's Summit of Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the curtain fell on the stage show on Fuente Osmeña Park in the city center, the focal point of the people's nightly celebrations since Dec. 1.

The breakneck pace of last-minute preparations for the scheduled arrival today of foreign leaders for the 12th Asean Summit ground to a halt as some of the delegates already in Cebu City packed their bags and left under pouring rain.

The official reason for the postponement was an approaching storm in the Pacific, although the weather bureau said it was unlikely to hit Cebu directly.

Officials predictably dismissed widespread speculation that terrorist threats that had prompted the United States, Britain, Australia and Japan to issue an advisory to their citizens on Wednesday to avoid Cebu province was the reason for the decision.

But there were also fresh reports of restiveness in the Philippine military over attempts to turn through Congress initiatives to amend the Constitution, following a setback to the Supreme Court and the Senate's refusal to go along with it.

Said Tim Wright, general manager of Shangri-La Mactan Resort and Spa where the participants were to be billeted: "Obviously, we are a little disappointed. However, we appreciate that the safety of the leaders is of utmost importance."

Gwendolyn Garcia, 51, the governor

CEBUANOS, A10

WHAT'S INSIDE

The usual suspects: Don't harm protesters vs Con-ass, junior officers warn President Arroyo. They vow to counter 'push with push, force with force, fire with fire.'

NEWS / A2

A2
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2006
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

GMA told: Don't stop AFP protesters

By Fe Zamora

A GROUP OF JUNIOR OFFICERS WHO CLAIMED to have followers in the Armed Forces of the Philippines, particularly the Army and Marines nationwide, yesterday warned President Macapagal-Arroyo against causing "harm" to protesters who would march against the proposed Constitutional assembly, saying that they were prepared to counter "push with push, force with force, fire with fire."

In a statement to the Inquirer, Kawal Pilipino said it saw a "constitutional coup" when allies of President Arroyo in the House of Representatives railroaded a resolution to amend the Constitution via a constituent assembly (Con-ass).

"The nation is shocked and outraged. All the institutions of society are trying to protect this iniquity," said Kawal Pilipino, a group which consists of officers holding the rank of second lieutenant up to major.

"There is a widespread sentiment in the Armed Forces that we must protect the people and defend the Constitution from all abuses," an Army captain based south of Manila said in a telephone interview.

The officer had asked the Inquirer to hide his identity for security reasons. He had been interviewed by the Inquirer in the past.

"We have been told that huge rallies and marches will be taking place next week. We give fair warning to Malacañang, Congress and the police: Do not even think to enable them, do not even think to do the marchers harm. We will meet push with push, force with force, fire with fire," he said.

Kawal Pilipino first surfaced at a press conference in early 2004 where it warned about a grand plan to rig the May 2004 elections to ensure the victory of President Arroyo.

At least six Army captains were held at a military stockade and investigated on charges that they were involved in a seditious plot against the government. They have been dismissed, however.

"Our group has grown bigger after the incident, contrary to what the government has been saying that the Kawal Pilipino had been disbanded," the Army captain added.

"We have members in every Army division. We are everywhere," he said.

According to him, Kawal Pilipino members were holding positions from company commander down to platoon leader. Those holding the rank of major were assigned as staff officers of division, brigade and battalions, he said.

Kawal Pilipino was organized in 2003, but it made its first public appearance only before the May 2004 elections to warn about the administration's plan to ensure Mr Arroyo's continued stay in power.

More than 20 officers led by Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim are awaiting court-martial for their planned "withdrawal of support" from the Arroyo administration allegedly during the 20th anniversary of the 1986 People Power revolution in February this year.

A number of junior officers also remain in jail for demanding the Arroyo's resignation during the aborted Oakwood mutiny in July 2003.

Senior Secretary Raul Gonzalez, however, was undaunted by the plan of the Church, opposition and militant groups to stage mass actions against the House-only sponsored constitution assembly.

"We are not afraid of that. Let them try to do it," Gonzalez said in reaction to the issue raised by some of the President's allies that the Con-ass issue would unite members of the Arroyo administration to effect a "people power" type of uprising.

But he admitted that the planned protests had prompted Speaker Jose de Venecia to offer the scenario the idea of amending the Charter through a constitutional convention.

"In effect the House here is yielding to them already," Gonzalez told the Inquirer in a cellphone interview from Manila.

But videos asked whether the House "has forfeited" on the Con-ass issue, Gonzalez said: "Not necessarily, but to show them that we are not that inflexible ... we are accommodative there ... we are open to other options."

He asked all sectors of society—including Fr Shilton Andrey Jillar Yolardo ... to take up De Venecia's proposal if only to unite the country. With Armando N. Mercene

Gloria insists Asean summit reset due to typhoon threat

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Nikko Dizon and Dona Pazolagun

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo said the postponement of the Summit of Leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) because of a typhoon threat was not a setback and assured the region that the conference would take place under "clearer skies" next month.

"There is a consensus to postpone the meeting because of the typhoon, but a strong impetus to return to the summit at the soonest possible time. The majorities of 600 million people in East Asia cannot be put on hold," the President said in a statement yesterday.

"The Philippines gives its firm assurance that there has been no setback in the progress of the Asean agenda and process," she said.

The President came out for the first time to explain the last minute decision to suspend the summit on the eve of its opening.

"In deals of the Asean, the Philippine is responsible for the safety and well being of the summit participants in the face of inclement weather. Our responsibility in the Filipino people also lies in preparing to the best we can for the possible onslaught of another strong typhoon," she said.

"This is a necessary process—as we commend for the leaders and they can also commend it to our people safely in the spirit of a shutting and caring community. I thank the leaders for their understanding and support," she said.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the President approved the postponement because she might not be able to come all her attention on the summit, particularly if the typhoon had the same devastating effect as the one that hit the Bicol region last week.

Ermita said the postponement was discussed briefly with visiting Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who told the President that he fully understood her decision. With Philip Tubeza and Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon

TUNDRA
A perfect cool holiday gift
SAVE 80%
EVAPORATIVE AIRCON
(FINLAND TECH)
RESIDENTIAL SERIES
Also available: COMMERCIAL, INDUSTRIAL KITCHEN INTAKE HOODS & TUNNEL VENT SYSTEM (more than 24 MODELS to choose from)
a product of : GREPAC RENEWAL ENERGY CORP.
METRO MANILA OUTLET: HANDYMAN, Robinsons Galleria, Pioneer Mall, Festival Mall
GREPAC BLDG Salazar St.
HANDYMAN Bacoor,

WHY WOMEN RULE

US Ambassador Kristie Kenney snaps the line during the parade given in her honor by the Philippine Military Academy on Saturday. Kenney remained the woman cadets, who were allowed to order at the academy only since 1993, that "I am in a job now that was not performed by women. But today's world speaks to what at an equals ... it is what we (Filipinos and Americans) have in common that binds us and makes us great."

CHRYSLER
Presenting 120,000 reasons to go on a family holiday.
Chrysler Town and Country
Chrysler Pacifica
The Chrysler Town & Country and the Chrysler Pacifica. Now for as low as P120,000 DP.
CHRYSLER TOWN AND COUNTRY
CHRYSLER PACIFICA
3 YEAR WARRANTY

Asean nurses accord great boost to RP

By Raoul W. Dominguez

THE PHILIPPINES "WON BIG" IN THE MINIsterial meeting of economic ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as the 10-member bloc signed late Saturday night a Mutual Recognition Agreement on nurses, according to a senior trade official.

Alonzo Yason L. Balbagling, director of the Department of Trade and Industry's Bureau of International Trade Relations, said in an interview the signing of an MRA would translate to the deployment of more Filipino nurses—one of the country's biggest human resource exports...within the region.

Hearing an hour before midnight last Friday, the economic ministers also signed five documents that are expected to push forward the establishment of an Asean Economic Community as well as pave the way toward free trade with China.

The documents signed require only the ministers' signatures to be validated.

Asean groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Balbagling, who represented the Philippines in the senior economic officials meeting held in preparation for the abruptly postponed 12th Asean Summit, said the MRA would boost the country's drive to strengthen the "Philippine brand of nursing professionals."

Reconcile various standards

He explained that the MRA would help reconcile differing standards and regulations of the profession among the 10 countries and help ease the many of Filipino nurses to the more developed members where demand is expected to outstrip local supply in the coming years.

The Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Cosalan Jr. said the MRA would strengthen professional capabilities by promoting the flow of relevant information and exchange of expertise, experience and best practices suited to the specific needs of" members.

Japan links loans to rights record

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

JAPAN IS PREPARED TO EXTEND FRESH loans to the Philippines, less the latter issue address the worsening human rights situation in the country.

Visiting Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told President Macapagal-Arroyo on Saturday that Japan would provide such 5 billion yen ($37 million) loan for a flood damage control project for the Pasig-Marikina river.

He pushed through with his trip to Manila despite the postponement of the Asean summit in Cebu due to a typhoon. He two-day visit coincided with the 50th anniversary of diplomatic ties between the Philippines and Japan.

The Prime Minister and his wife arrived in Manila Friday at 9:10 a.m. and were welcomed by the President and First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

After several signing ceremonies, the two leaders proceeded to the Pasay City terminal of the Light Railway Transit Authority for the ceremonial run of the Japan-made third generation of trains that would service the Caloocan City-to-Baclaran route starting next week. (See photo on Page A10.)

The Palace held a state dinner for the Prime Minister at Malacañang's Kalai Hall last night.

The Japanese premier also assured Ms Arroyo that Japan would not dump its train rejects in the Philippines as claimed by environmentalists amid a new trade pact between the two countries.

"Prime Minister Abe told the President not to worry about the topic anymore because Japan would not dump them here. They are here to help our economy," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

A joint statement issued later suggested that Japan was tying the release of further loans to the Philippines to the unresolved killings of activists and journalists throughout the country that have hounded the President.

The joint statement stated, "The two leaders emphasized the importance of sustaining harmony, upholding democratic values and promoting human rights, as well as preserving the environment and social well-being with respect to general governance and to the implementation of the official development assistance."

On Friday, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Aso said in Cebu City that the Philippines must improve its human rights record as a condition to receiving more economic aid.

In talks on the sidelines of the canceled regional summit, Aso told his Philippine counterpart, Alberto Romulo, that while Tokyo wanted to extend more yen loans, there was concern in Japan over the politically motivated killings.

"In Japan, some people are extremely concerned about political killings in the Philippines, particularly those of leftist-oriented individuals and journalists," he was quoted as saying.

"In order for us to release more economic aid, I want the Philippines to understand the strong concerns among some people about the human rights record of the Philippines," he said.

Local human rights groups have alleged that more than 700 activists have been killed since Ms Arroyo came to power in 2001.

But the government has denied involvement in the killings, blaming many of them on factional fighting between leftist groups. Without APP report

EOS DIGITAL
Canon
Delighting You Always

CANON SHOOT & RUN 06

Join the 2006 Canon Shoot & Run Photo Contest -
the first-ever photography marathon in the Philippines to be held on December 16, 2006. Participants will be given limited time to shoot a variety of topics and will get a chance to win P100,000 in cash and over P300,000 worth of Canon gear.

Think you've got what it takes to capture the perfect shot? Register now!

The competition is open to all amateur and professional photographers*. Deadline of registration is on December 15, 2006 at 12:00 PM

For more information, visit www.canon.com.ph/dialogue/shootandrun

* Digital SLR cameras are required in order to participate. Non-Canon SLR owners are required to use a PIXMA printer.

HOW TO ACCESS THE INTERNET VIA LAPTOP OR DESKTOP USING YOUR SMART BUDDY 3G CELLPHONE

Now, anytime could be the perfect time to be productive. Just use your SMART Buddy 3G cellphone as a modem. Connect it to your laptop or desktop via USB Cable, Bluetooth or Infrared and enjoy broadband internet speeds up to 384Kbps. Now you can surf, email, blog, chat, upload and download all you want!

Get High Speed Internet Connection!
Pay-per-use for only P10 flat rate per 30 mins!

Try it now! Here's how:

1. Key in **SET 3G <Handset Model>**, and send to **211** to download the Smart 3G settings using a SMART Buddy SIM. Ex. SET 3G N70 and send to 211 (P1.50/text)
2. **Connect your Smart 3G phone to your PC or Desktop** (Please consult your phone's User Manual on how to connect. You might need to install the necessary software, i.e. Nokia PC Suite, Sony Ericsson PC Suite, or Motorola Phone Tools, provided with your phone).
3. Follow the instructions in the provided software to make a connection.
4. If prompted to choose a Connection or Access Point, select **"SMART Internet"**.
5. Once connected you can now open your PC's Web browser or Email program to surf, email, chat, upload or download.

For more detailed instructions on your 3G handset set-up, go to www.smart.com.ph/broadband/3g

To avail of SMART 3G services, get any of these SMART 3G handsets at affordable prices from SMART Buddy* or SMART Gold**:

Nokia 6131	Nokia N73	Nokia N80	Nokia N91	Sony Ericsson W810i
Nokia 6233	Nokia N75	Nokia N90*	Motorola E770	Sony Ericsson W880i
Nokia N70*	Nokia N77	Nokia N91*	Motorola V3i	Sony Ericsson W960i

*Avail of a SMART Sulit Plus load. Apply online at www.smart.com.ph/gold

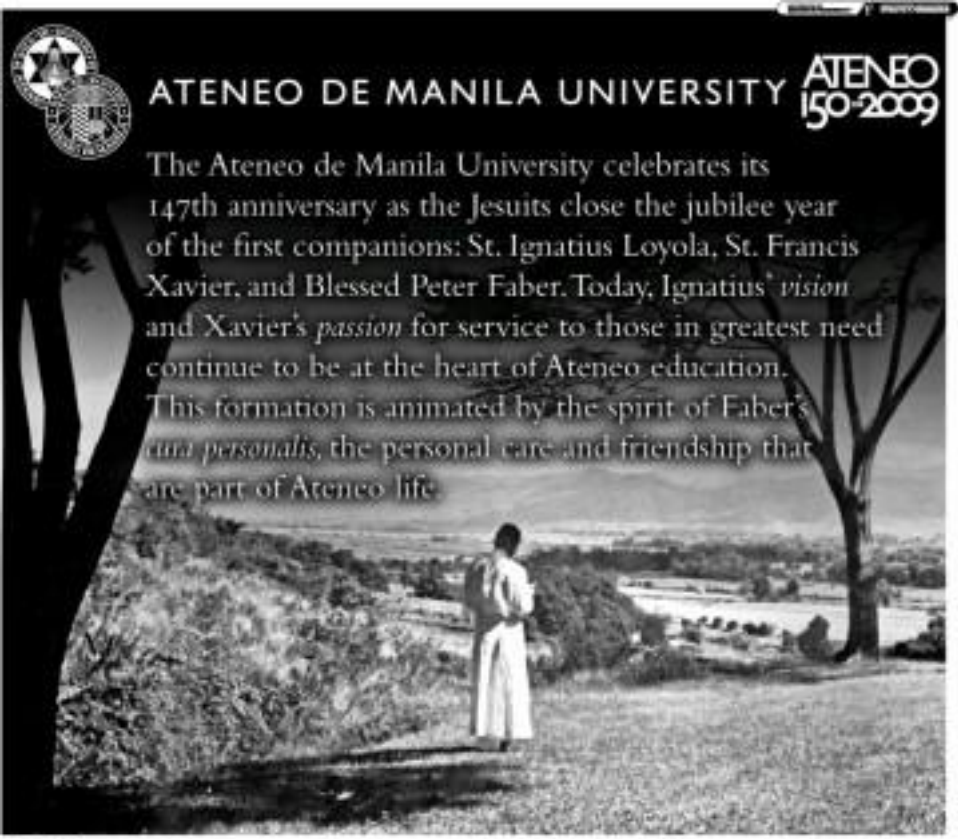
For more info, visit the nearest SMART Wireless Center or go to www.smart.com.ph/3G

SMART GOLD

ATENEO DE MANILA UNIVERSITY

ATENEO 150 2009

The Ateneo de Manila University celebrates its 147th anniversary as the Jesuits close the jubilee year of the first companions: St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, and Blessed Peter Faber. Today, Ignatius' *vision* and Xavier's *passion* for service to those in greatest need continue to be at the heart of Ateneo education. This formation is animated by the spirit of Faber's *cura personalis*, the personal care and friendship that are part of Ateneo life.



A balcony, a tomb, a letter: The gifts of the first Jesuits and formation at the Ateneo

Daniel Patrick L. Huang, s.j.
ex-Interdicastery Duellist '06
Provincial Superior
Society of Jesus
in the Philippines

A balcony a home. An empty tomb on an island off the coast of China. A letter written more than four hundred years ago. These three things symbolize, for me, the gifts of the first three Jesuit companions whose jubilee we celebrate this year. They are gifts the Ateneo de Manila hopes to share with all who become part of her life.

Attached to the magnificent Church of the Gesù in Rome are a few rooms visited with much veneration by all who belong to the Ignatian family, rooms where St. Ignatius rarely lived, worked, and prayed as General of the fledgling Society of Jesus. Today, one finds there a little museum with Ignatian memorabilia, and a simple but elegant chapel. But, for me, most meaningful is a tiny balcony, opening out of the chapel in Ignatius' day, where he stepped out into the piazza, as he often did in the evenings after a day filled with cares and work, to refresh see the expanse of the night sky.

Ignatius would look at the stars. He would gaze long and lovingly at the lights in the night sky, then stick to his knees, and bow his head in humble, grateful, awed prayer. This is an image of Ignatius's gift of vision. He had the gift of "finding God in all things." In the stars, Ignatius met and "felt" God. The broad, star-studded night sky led him to encounter the immensity of God's power, the unrestrained eminence of God's plan for the world, yet also the intimacy and intensity of God's love for him. That limitless canopy of sky inspired in Ignatius the breadth of imagination that was never satisfied with the mediocre, ever more "magnanimous," but always sought out the things, the "more," which were for the greater glory of God.

Off the southern coast of China, there is a small island called Shangchuan. Four hundred years ago, it was a quiet fishing village. Today, it is an area busy with trade and thriving contrast to the booming cities sprouting up quickly in today's hectic, development-driven China. A few kilometers out of a modest commercial center, on a hillside fronting the sea is a rundown chapel with an empty tomb. Here, we believe, was the place where St. Francis Xavier, at the age of 46, died and was laid to rest for a few years, before parts of his body made their way all around the world again.

When I visited that tomb last July, I found myself spontaneously drawn to silent and prolonged prayer. I was moved at the sadness of Xavier's last moments. Here he died alone, half a world away from home, without his friends in Europe even knowing that he was in extremis. Here he died, after years of pioneering work of bringing the Good News deep after baptizing 10 his arms active in only after traveling through the dwelling jungles of Malacca, after enduring humiliation in Japan, and he died here, on the lonely island, precisely because, in order to win the people of Asia for Christ, he was convinced he had to go to the impossible: enter the great and mysterious Empire of China and preach the Gospel there. He died with an unfulfilled dream, a longing unrealized.

That tomb is an image of Xavier's gift: his burning and intense Passion: Only Ambassador—for Christ, for the peoples of Asia, for service—could explain why Francis Xavier, scion of a noble family who grew up in a castle in Navarre, died alone and with arms outstretched toward China on Sancian Shangchuan.

In 1540, a forty-one-old Jesuit from Savoy named Peter Faber was finishing up seven years of almost unceasing travel throughout a Europe torn by fierce religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants. Faber had been called to the Council of Trent, the Church's corporate response to the challenge of the Reformation. A dream in fourth from thousands of miles of missionary journeys, Faber, in the end, was unable to go. Instead, from Madrid, he wrote a brief letter to a friend already in Trent, giving helpful tips from his own experience on how to deal with the Protestants. Faber died a few months after that in Rome, with his dear friend Ignatius close by.

When I read that letter this year, I was amazed at an era of violence, demonization, and persecution in the name of "the true religion," Faber counseled respect and hospitality, love to live those with different beliefs, he said, rather than fighting that would foster conversions for them, and seek to win their love and confidence. In a time when the mode of discourse between Catholics and Protestants was sarcastic-laden or given debate. In which the sole goal was to prove the error and bad faith of the other, Faber suggested dialogue: avoid topics of controversy, seek instead to build understanding based on things, specially spiritual longings and holy desires, held in common. That letter captures for me the special gift of Blessed Peter Faber: his sure personality, his loving spirit, the "gold" companion," had a gift for friendship, for listening and accompaniment, for building up broken community in a time of deep divisions and moral distrust.

I find it striking that this year Jubilee Year, we not only recall that the Society of Jesus began in the friendship of these three gifted individuals, but that their friendship began in a university. They started out as commoners thrown together university of Christendom of that time, the University of Paris, which counted among its eminent professors in previous centuries such luminaries as Albert the Great, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas. Xavier and Faber, who were already sharing lodgings, she not realize that when they welcomed the older Ignatius, their lives would be changed. Ignatius helped his new friends discover their truest and best values in their relationship with Christ. In this history of the first three companions, we see precisely what can happen in a university. Not only is the intellect trained, but, through friendships, hearts can be transformed. Dreams kindled, lives reoriented, and in the process, the world changed.

If this happened in the University of Paris four hundred years ago, then this happens here in the Ateneo de Manila—and not by accident, but by design and plan. I know that I speak for many others when I say that my education in the Ateneo de Manila changed my life. I did not just get professional training in my four years of college in the late 1970s. Somehow it all came together: the core curriculum, especially philosophy and theology, social awareness, analysis and service programs in student organizations like me, ACs and ASCAs, formation for leadership in the Sanggunian, and programs of prayer and spiritual formation, that brought me to know Christ, to enter into living friendship with him, to hear his call to make his love and his mission the foundation of my life. And I am convinced that all these programs only bore fruit for me because of outstanding and dearly caring mentors and wisdom figures in the Ateneo, our dear them. Fr. Ben Nebres, Jim Reuters (Ba' 6) Roque Ferriols, Fr. Joe Galdon, Fr. Ramon Reyes, Fr. Ramon Fernandez, Fr. Edna Manlapaz, to name but a few. Moderators of our student organizations, Dad's Franz's Bally, Mr. Gilbey Cabauss, Mr. Johnny Kanapi, Sr. Fely Montilla. I am equally convinced that my Ateneo experience transformed me because of the influence and support of peers, classmates, and friends, many of whom, twenty-or years after graduation, remain not only friends, but people with whom I share a vision of faith and hope and a passion for service and social change, and whose friendship and witness encourage and inspire me in the face of all that discourages, to hold on to the ideal of living as a person for others.

So much has changed since my time in the Ateneo: new challenges, both external and internal. New policies. Our young people grow up in a globalized world with a dizzying number of choices of lifestyles and values. The ideologies of the 1970s have collapsed, a new distinctions with political institutions and players has set in, and there is a search for convincing and effective frameworks of social change. Our students are more pressured by a more international sphere of action and decision making. The dramatic and necessary expansion of the Ateneo in terms of number of students and faculty has radically changed the context of formation and calls for a deep rethinking of formation strategies and methods. Moreover, we see more clearly that to be a "man or woman for others" does not find one to "alternative careers" like best work, education, or religious life, important as these are. Rather, it means becoming a "professional for others," one who orients his or her profession, whether it be business, or science or art, towards nation building.

In the past few years, I have had the opportunity of participating in efforts at rethinking the social and spiritual formation programs of the Ateneo, in the face of a new world inside and outside the university. And while there remains much to be done, I am encouraged by two things. First, I find that there remains a strong commitment in the Ateneo community to find ways to ensure that Ateneo education is truly spiritually and socially transformative. Secondly, encountering students in different organizations and activities, from leadership seminars to Task Force Hope to Oblong Kalinga, I see happening to scholars young people what Ateneo did for my batchmates and me. I see people changed deeply because of their Ateneo education.

Just as Ignatius did for Xavier and Faber, the Ateneo continues to call out the best and truest selves of our students. That the Ateneo can touch more effectively, not just the minds, but the hearts and spirits of its students, in this new world of the early twenty-first century, remains our challenge. That the vision, passion, and caring spirit of Ignatius, Xavier and Faber, be formed in Ateneans, for the greater glory of God and for the sake of building up our nation, remains our dream.

www.ateneo.edu

Smith said to be getting used to life as jailbird

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

SMITH

HIS GOVERNMENT is moving heaven and earth to get him out of the Makati City Jail, but in the meantime, convicted rapist Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith has begun to play down his predicament instead, in his current detention room.

The young US Marine is not accustomed to a jail cell with other inmates but is being held in the records section office of the jail, where joined cabinets topped by a mattress serve as his bed, and where the check-in security guards stay with him. All his needs are sent over by the US Embassy.

"He is trading a lot now and he grants us once in a while. He appears to have adjusted," jail warden Supt. Carlos Orcino told the Inquirer yesterday.

Inmates at the jail cannot see Smith, however. Orcino could only be and four other jail officers are allowed to enter Smith's temporary cell.

The Philippine and US governments had already agreed to return Smith to US Embassy custody in line with provisions of the Visiting Forces Agreement, but Makati Judge Benjamin Relan decided to let the 23-year-old Marine sit out the weekend at the Makati jail until he got around to hearing the custody plea on Monday.

Smith was convicted last week of raping the woman the country had come to know as "Nicole" while his three Marine co-accused were acquitted and were immediately flown out of the country.

The jail warden said much upset has Smith been since

'Seniang' strengthens, tears into Samar, Leyte

From page A1

per hour near the center and gustiness of up to 150 kph, the second typhoon to barrel into the archipelago in as many weeks toppled trees, electric poles and telephone lines.

Storm Signal No. 3 was hoisted at noon yesterday over Samar, Leyte and Biliran—the three islands comprising the Eastern Visayas region—and northern Cebu.

The Regional Disaster Coordinating Council in Tacloban said hundreds of families in the three islands had been moved to higher ground and given shelter in public school buildings.

In Biliran, the third province south hit by Supertyphoon "Reming" last week, disaster officials evacuated around 75,000 residents in anticipation of heavy rainfall that could trigger flashfloods and landslides from Mayon Volcano.

The residents, from 41 villages in the cities of Legazpi, Ligao and Tabaco and the towns of Daraga, Guinobatan, Camalig and Oas, Albay, were taken to holding areas starting at 6 a.m.

Adam Hamza of the operations division of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) in Legazpi said officials had identified pick-up points and holding areas as early as Friday night.

Painful lesson

"There are enough shelters for the evacuees. We have identified the churches, village halls and chapels, private residences and buildings, and schools that would serve as temporary holding areas until the typhoon is over," he said.

The painful lesson learned from the mudslides unleashed by Reming was evident.

Residents were seen fleeing their homes and riding in open trucks headed for heavy rain.

The women covered their children with mosels as protection from the rain, and most of the mosels stayed put in their homes to guard their properties.

Others scrambled to find safe refuge on their own, defying government-planned evacuation procedures.

Legazpi Mayor Noli Bolal appealed for calm, saying that everything was under government control and that many holding areas had been opened to residents.

He said military and damp trucks had been dispatched to designated pick-up points.

Vice Mayor Jose Rito Salazar advised residents over the radio to bring only their most important belongings to avoid congestion in holding areas.

At 2 p.m., an hour before the cut-off time imposed by its evacuees, a mall was still swarming with panic-buyers.

Blackouts, landslides

Several areas in Metro Cebu experienced blackouts before noon when electric transformers exploded because of the strong winds, the Visayan Electric Co. (Vesco) reported.

Vesco said it had dispatched linemen and engineers to restore power in Lourdes in Talisay City, Cebu province, in Mandaue City and U Banua. If del Rosario, Labog and Agus in Cebu City before 5 p.m.

But just as power was restored in these areas, Vesco resolved to turn off more power transmission elsewhere.

With the weather bureau Pagasa hoisting Signal No. 3 over Leyte, Capiz, Iloilo, Antique, Guimaras, northern Negros, the rest of Cebu and Bohol, the Philippine Coast Guard grounded inter-island vessels, stranding thousands of travelers at the ports.

In Surigao, more than 1,200 passengers, 68 boats, 41 trucks, and 12 small cars were stranded at the ports of Bislig, Tubod, and Pilar, the Office of Civil Defense reported.

A report received by the PDCC said landslides covered the highway in San Julian, Eastern Samar, rendering the road impassable for commuters bound for the capital Borongan.

Around 30 vehicles were also immobilized starting at noon on the highway in Hinabangan, about 24 km from Borongan, Inquirer correspondent Fe Cyrain Cabuchan said.

According to Cabuchan, who was covering the effects of the typhoon in the area, strong tropical rain is blustering, toppled electric poles and gasoline were limited the highway from Calbayog (where Reming made landfall as second storm) to Borongan.

"As said he and other trapped commuters had been trying to move the downed trees but that they had had to contend with strong winds and heavy rains.

Contingency plans

At Camp Aguinaldo in Manila, where she presided over a meeting of the National Disaster Coordinating Council at around 2 p.m., President Macapagal-Arroyo reminded officials of affected cities and municipalities to prepare their contingency plans.

She was briefed by Nathaniel Cruz, chief weather forecaster of Pagasa, on Reming's track.

"Reming is not as strong as Reming, but it is still a typhoon with maximum sustained winds of 120 kph," Cruz said.

Ms Arroyo had postponed the lawmakers' summit set to open next week in Cebu because of Reming, but Pagasa officials said they had not advised Malacañang to cancel the summit.

At 4 p.m. yesterday, Reming was spotted over Tacloban with gustiness of up to 110 kph. It was moving west northwest at 22 kph.

Pagasa's severe weather bulletin issued at 4:15 p.m. oftlifted Signal No. 3 (winds of more than 185 kph) hoisted over northern Cebu and Signal No. 2 (winds of 68 kph to 100 kph) over the rest of the province including Bohol.

Of today's expected weather, Pagasa said: "The whole of Visayas including Siargao island will have stormy weather with rough to very rough seas. Most region and Northern Mindanao will experience rains and gusty winds, and the coastal waters of these areas will be moderate to rough.

"Eastern and Southern Luzon will be cloudy with scattered rain showers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy, with isolated rain showers."

Reming is expected to be 30 km southeast of Coron in Palawan's far afternoon.

Affected areas

Other areas under Signal No. 3 are Masbate and thimbles near Luzon, Southern Samar, Eastern Samar, Surigao, Leyte, Southern Leyte, Siliman, northern Negros, Guimaras, Iloilo, Capiz and Aklan in the Visayas and Dinagat Island near Mindanao.

Other areas under Signal No. 2 include Surigao, Aklan, Bohol, Island and the Mindoro provinces, the rest of Iloilo, Antique, the rest of Negros, Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Cotabato City, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani and Davao and Siargao islands.

Those under Signal No. 1 are Catanduanes, Camarines Sur, Sorsogon, Siquijor, northern Palawan, Antique del Norte and Camiguin Island.

Residents of affected places were warned of possible landslides, flashfloods and storm surges. Reports from Nicanor Lubre, Cyrain Cabuchan, Joey Galicia, Carla Gomez and Jhannes Arquillano, Inquirer Visayas; Ephraim Aguilar, Debra Pepa and Bobby Labadie, Inquirer Southern Luzon; and Dona Dayao-Bogao and Norman Bordadora in Manila

STRANDED Inside the Catarman terminal in pier 22 these passengers can only wait for their ships after all marine vessels were put on hold in anticipation of Typhoon Seniang's arrival. ELVIN ALDOVINO

JP PUBLIC AUCTION
"The Fastest Cash Converter"
ON-SITE AUCTION
LOCATION SITE: NO. 151 BIC ARTHUR HIGHWAY, MAKILAS, VALENZUELA CITY (NEAR FATIMA UNIVERSITY)
REGISTRATION & VIEWING DATE: DEC. 11, 2006, 9:00AM-5:00PM
AUCTION DATE: DEC. 12, 2006 (TUE), 1:00 PM
RESTAURANT FURNITURES & EQUIPMENTS
REFUNDABLE CONSUMABLE DEPOSIT OF P 5,000.00
WE BUY & ACCEPT CONSIGNMENT
FOR VIEWING SCHEDULE AND REGISTRATION CALL FOR INFO
299-8318 / (0917)761-1087

Storm-lashed RP loses typhoon committee post

From page A1

tists. The sessions exchange information on how to deal with tropical cyclones.

And just like the tropical cyclones that the others monitor, the committee has shifted its home base from the Philippines to China for the first time in three decades.

The WMO last week transferred its typhoon base from the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration to neighboring Macau.

It says the first time since 1971, that the secretariat has been moved, according to Pagasa director Prisco Nilo, who will retire chief of the typhoon committee until November next year.

"The Philippines lobbied to establish the committee because we're always hit by typhoons. He wanted to exchange information with our neighbors on how to deal with typhoons," Nilo told the Inquirer yesterday.

He said the members agreed during an earlier meeting in Vietnam that the secretariat should be rotated among the countries in the typhoon committee.

Macau offered to put in an additional $100,000 (P4.9 million) to help meet technical requirements of the transition, he said.

Major concerns

"The Philippines did not have the money to match that amount. And it's good that alternatively volunteered. You have it, now. Nobody wanted to take over before," Nilo said.

The typhoon committee drafts the regional programs of the WMO mainly on how to improve scientific capabilities of each government and how to reduce the negative impact of typhoons.

It also reviews relevant scientific and socioeconomic data, studies country reports and monitors if governments meet the program requirements of the WMO.

The official members of the secretariat are done on Wednesday, but they usually stay for the weekend for gathering of reports from 14 countries during the 2006 season of the typhoon committee.

In the last decade, typhoons have become a major concern of the WMO and of the United Nations Democratic and Social Committee for Asia and the Pacific.

Impact of typhoons

Typhoon-related disasters account for 84 percent of total fatalities and 98 percent of total economic damage from natural disasters from 1998 to 2006, according to Unescap.

"We are deeply concerned about the impact of typhoons-related disasters ... The efforts of the committee are essential to create better conditions for developing countries in the region to work toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals," Unescap representative to Asia Erik said in his speech at the opening of the 39th session of the WMO typhoon committee on Monday.

He said efforts by the typhoon committee had greatly improved the warning system in many parts of the world but an assessment of the socioeconomic impact of disaster was needed.

$39B needed

Ti noted a study conducted early this year that showed the Asia-Pacific region was the hardest hit by natural disasters and that it needed an investment of $39 billion (P1.9 trillion) in caps with the aftermath.

He said the region needed $39 billion (P942 billion) for the economy to recover and $20 billion (P992 billion), representing one percent of the region's total gross domestic product, for disaster prevention and mitigation.

From 1900 to 2005, the region accounted for 91 percent of deaths and 40 percent of economic damage due to natural disasters in the world, highlighting the great environmental impact of disasters on the Asia Pacific.

"Regional efforts are necessary to mitigate the impact of natural disasters, which have profoundly affected many countries in Asia and the Pacific," Ti stressed.

Disaster preparedness

He noted that of the Asia Pacific countries, only Japan was ahead in the absolute amount for a disaster prevention program.

"The best example we found was Japan, but most of the scientist in the region do not invest that well. There's why disaster preparedness and prevention must continue," Ti said.

Malaysia was tweeting only $37 percent of its GDP for disaster management, he said. The Philippine government allocated P288 million for its weather forecaster year and P492 million this year.

The typhoon committee mission to help fund 60 action programs for meteorology, hydrology disaster prevention and preparedness, and training and research.

"There is a need for development partners to provide assistance to effectively implement items in the projects which cannot be funded nationally," WMO regional director for Asia and the Pacific Tokiyoshi Toyota said.

Among the members of the typhoon committee are the United States, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Korea, Malaysia, China, Laos and Cambodia.

KING JAMES AUCTION
ON-SITE AUCTION
SITE: FORMER EDISON POWER PLANT
LUZON AVE., BRGY. TAGUMPAY, BALIWAG, BULACAN
REGISTRATION & VIEWING DATE: DEC. 11-13, 2006, 9:00AM-5:00PM
AUCTION DATE: DEC. 14, 2006 (THU), 10:30 AM
"PHASE 2 GROUND ZERO DEMOLITION"
REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT OF P 50,000.00
WE BUY FACTORIES AND MANUFACTURING PLANT
CALL FOR INFO: (02) 721-3233 / 733-3277 / (0919) 531-0873

KING JAMES AUCTION
AUCTION TODAY!
PULILAN WAREHOUSE
SITE: 333 OLD NATIONAL HIGHWAY, SOLIS CRUZ, PULILAN, BULACAN
REGISTRATION & VIEWING DATE: DEC. 11-13, 2006, 9:00AM-5:00PM
AUCTION DATE: DEC. 14, 2006 (THU), 10:30 AM
INDUSTRIAL / SCRAP & HOME EQUIPMENT AUCTION
Refundable Deposit: Reg. Bidders Php 5,000 | Scrap Buyers Php 20,000
WE BUY CLOSED FACTORIES AND MANUFACTURING PLANT
CALL FOR INFO: (02) 721-3233 / 721-3277 / (0927) 328-0437

FREE
Satellite TV Receiver + Dish
Advance 30 Month Dream 880 Subscription - Only P8,999
SUBSCRIBE TO DREAM NOW! Call (02) 818 0888 (Cubao) • (032) 255 3000 (PUBT)
FREE INSTALLATION
WATCH LIVE SPORTS Pay-Per-View ONLY WITH DREAM
MD

12th ASEAN SUMMIT

CEBU, PHILIPPINES
13 - 14 December 2006

One Caring and Sharing Community

President Arroyo formally opening the 12th ASEAN summit and ministerial meetings in Kapitolyo on August 8, 2006. (Sun.)

Philippines 2006—A strong nation fighting poverty through Filipino excellence and global engagement.

ASEAN 2006—neighbors working for a better world, embracing hope, sharing dreams.

Caring for our God-given natural environment and the protection and welfare of migrant workers.

Sharing energy independence and the collective will to banish corruption, crime and terror.

Caring and Sharing for Peace through interfaith dialogue and cultural understanding.

ASEAN—One caring and sharing community

Key Concerns that President Arroyo will Champion in the 12th ASEAN Summit

The key concerns that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will champion during the 12th ASEAN Summit and other top-level meetings are near and dear to her vision for the Filipino people. The first priority is a focus on social justice, including care for our God-given natural environment and the protection and welfare of our children. That is why the President has chosen the theme of "One Caring and Sharing Community" for the Summit. The second is the value of closer regional economic cooperation and integration to expand the country's markets, increase investments and create jobs here at home. This includes a need to care for our overseas workers. Lastly, energy independence and self-reliance, and to wage out the corrosive effects of corruption. Finally, the President is focused on bringing together all nations to fight terrorism, provide for protection of our homeland and bring peace to Mindanao and other trouble spots in the region. ★

With Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo

Benefits to RP of GMA leadership in ASEAN

The leadership of President Arroyo in ASEAN and other international forums has directly benefited the people of the Philippines. Through her hard work in the international community, the President has generated investments and jobs, strengthened our economy in the fight against terrorism, and improved social justice. The President is bringing those benefits home. The upcoming Leaders' Summits are a direct reflection of the benefits of the President's engagement and the honor and prestige she is bringing to the people of the Philippines through the presence of world leaders in Cebu City. The President is constantly working for a new, more modern Philippines and to eliminate poverty and improve the quality of life of every Filipino. And key to our future success as a nation is our ability to prepare our people to compete and win at home and abroad. To prepare our nation, the President believes that our young people must have every opportunity available to them to succeed. Engagement with other countries introduces all our people, particularly our youths, to the opportunities that the world holds in store for them. The President wants to make sure that our young people must be exposed to the workings of the Summits and the importance of producing new leaders who will guide our great nation in the future. ★

The Philippines in ASEAN

Since its founding 39 years ago, ASEAN has promoted peace and stability in this region and enhanced sustainable growth among its member countries. Over the years, the Philippines and the Filipino people have benefited from these ASEAN objectives. Because of enhanced regional stability, there has been increased investment and tourist flows between the Philippines and its neighbors in the region, and even beyond. On promoting stability, ASEAN supports the Philippines on vital national security questions, notably in the territorial dispute in the South China Sea. ASEAN has been nearly responsible for the emergence of a modus vivendi in this important area, also among the claimant countries. Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam have also extended crucial assistance for the peace process in Mindanao. They have facilitated peace talks and ceasefires and have provided diplomatic backing for the Philippines in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). ASEAN has matured from a mere economic grouping to a key regional organization that has touched the lives of the people in the region, ensuring their safety and improving their quality of life. The Philippines has played a key role in ongoing projects of ASEAN that include cooperative projects in the areas of HIV/AIDS, community based care for the elderly, occupational safety and health; sustainable employment, youth cultural forum, media exchanges, ASEAN university network, social welfare, family and population, and hard flu and SARS management. The Philippines also actively participated and even initiated cooperative efforts in the fight against terrorism, energy sharing, tourism promotion, human resource development, poverty eradication and protection of migrant workers. ★

Leaders Attending 12th ASEAN Summit

From 10 ASEAN Members

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah
Brunei Darussalam

Prime Minister Hun Sen
Cambodia

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono
Indonesia

Prime Minister Bounnang Vorachith
Laos

Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi
Malaysia

Prime Minister Lu Shui Bian
Myanmar

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
Philippines

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong
Singapore

Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej
Thailand

Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung
Vietnam

From 6 Dialogue Partners

Prime Minister John Howard
Australia

Premier Wen Jiabao
China

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh
India

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe
Japan

President Roh Moo-hyun
Republic of Korea

Prime Minister Helen Clark
New Zealand

The City of Cebu is the provincial capital of Cebu in the Philippines and is the second most important metropolitan center in the country. The City lies on the eastern coast of the island of Cebu and is the oldest City in the country. It is the country's main domestic shipping hub and is home to more than 80% of the country's international shipping companies. Cebu is also the main hub, outside of the capital, of international flights into the country and is the most important center of commerce, trade, and industry in the Visayas and Mindanao, the southern parts of the country. It is because of this and other important aspects that Cebu City is dubbed the Queen City of the South. According to the official 2000 census, it has a population of 718, 821 people in 147, 580 households.

Cebu City is the center of a metropolitan area called Metro Cebu, which includes the cities of Mandaue, Lapu-Lapu, and Talisay. Metro Cebu has a total population of more than 2 million people. The Mactan-Cebu International Airport, located in Lapu-Lapu City. To the northeast of the city are Mandaue, the town of Consolacion, to the west are Toledo City and the town of Minglanilla. Across Mactan Strait to the east is Mactan Island where Lapu-Lapu City is located.

The venues for the Leaders' Meeting and Retreat of the 12th ASEAN Summit and other related functions are the Mactan Hall of the Shangri-La's Mactan Island Resort and Spa (bottom left) and the Cebu International Convention Center in Mandaue City (bottom right).

www.12thaseansummit.org.ph

Official IT Partner: SM

Diamond Sponsor: PLDT, SMART

Corporate Partner

Official Mobile Handset Partner: LG

HOT AND COLD: Aguinaldo returns to his seat after the water-throwing episode that created an uproar. AUSTRIA

UNEXPECTED OUTBURST: Constantino berates De Venecia and his congressional colleagues for their "totally bereft of principles, that's why you are without shame." Constantino is quickly hot out of the room by brawl security. AUSTRIA

Senators dismiss Speaker's ultimatum

From page A1

The House majority has passed a resolution calling for Charter amendments through an assembly composed of the present members of Congress.

Some senators favor doing it through a constitutional convention, whose members would be composed of elected delegates.

'Cha-cha is dead'

"This development shows that Cha-cha is dead. It's finished, extended prematurely," Sen. Aloy Arroyo said in a telephone interview.

"This is a big revelation. Pie's in your face. The Constitution stays and we should celebrate already. Any talk about Con-con or the people's initiative is irrelevant," he added.

Arroyo said that the House leadership's "arrogance" showed that it never had the 195 votes, or the support of two-thirds of all members of Congress, needed to change the Charter.

He added that the House majority has clearly passed the 195 votes, or the support of two-thirds of all members of Congress, needed to change the Charter.

He added that the House majority has clearly passed the 195 votes, or the support of two-thirds of all members of Congress, needed to change the Charter.

VILLAR: It's been saving us a

ARROYO: They don't admit failure

'A bluff'

"The shift in the House position is an admission of what I have been saying—that they do not have the votes," Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. said in a telephone interview.

"This is a big revelation. Pie's in your face. The Constitution stays and we should celebrate already. Any talk about Con-con or the people's initiative is irrelevant," he added.

Arroyo said that the House leadership's "arrogance" showed that it never had the 195 votes, or the support of two-thirds of all members of Congress, needed to change the Charter.

He added that the House majority has clearly passed the 195 votes, or the support of two-thirds of all members of Congress, needed to change the Charter.

'Missing the point'

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has not officially reacted to the resolution.

But Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president and Jaro archbishop, said the House leadership "missed the point."

"The issue is not about the numbers. The issue is the people do not trust them. The people can't entrust Cha-cha to those who they do not trust," Lagdameo said, stressing that his words were his personal reaction and not CBCP's.

Lagdameo said the people were mystified by the motivation behind the rush to amend the Charter.

"We have lots of problems today such as the devaluation of the peso and the recent supertyphoon. Why don't we address these first?" he asked.

Apology first

"Charter change is not the problem of the common folk; those pushing for it seem to be obsessive-compulsive in doing so. There's something wrong here, why are they so insistent?" he said.

Asked if the CBCP would go ahead with its plan to stage a rally against Cha-cha on Friday, Quinto said the faithful should wait for the announcement of CBCP president and Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo.

"He has not said anything about these yet, but I've been hearing lines updates on the matter," he said.

He added consulting of top CBCP officials may be held on Monday to gather inputs from the CBCP permanent council members.

Teodoro Paseua, a spokesperson for evangelist Sen. Ed Villanueva and Bangon Pilipinas party, said the House leadership should first apologize for unilaterally reading the process of convening a constituent assembly without the concurrence of the Senate.

"We don't believe that is what they wanted to do... They just were overzealous in what they do down," Paseua said after De Venecia announced yesterday that the House was now willing to change the Charter via a constitutional convention.

Answer is 'No'

"No," Paseua said when asked if Bangon would heed the call of De Venecia for civil society to persuade senators to pass a resolution calling for a constitutional convention.

Paseua said there was reason to take De Venecia and the majority congressmen's announcement with caution.

"Will you believe him overnight? Whatever he says will have to be looked into it first," Paseua said.

Paseua said that unless the House leadership took back its previously approved resolutions, it could always pursue the constituent assembly route to amend the Charter. With reports from Norman Bordadora and Jerome Aning

Hotheads lose their cool, steal thunder from JDV presscon

By Michael Lim Ubac

SO DID IT APPARENTLY BE-cause it is the passionate debates that have been triggered by the House's Charter change drive.

Emotions run so high at a press conference yesterday called by Speaker Jose de Venecia on politics, not that a near-fistfight broke out among some of those attending the meeting at the Sheik Hotel in Makati.

In the middle of the commotion, left-leaning activist Renato Constantino Jr. angrily denounced the House leaders for their support for Charter change.

Raising his voice, Constantino told De Venecia and other House leaders: "I am completely appalled by your collective guilt. You are totally bereft of principles, that's why you are without shame."

He said the House leaders were a "disgrace" to the nation.

The statements provoked angry reactions.

"You have a right to ask a question but not berate anybody," Constantino but Rep. Luis Villafuerte shot back.

"Hinay a right to be here," Constantino said.

Irked by the chit-option, some reporters and newspaper columnists joined in the fray, triggering a shouting match.

Security officers surrounded Constantino and tried to lead him out of the room, but he resisted. "They are a bunch of social vagrants."

He was apparently referring to allegations that the House majority by cashing their plan to amend the Charter, was raping the Constitution.

As Constantino was being whisked away, Socrates Bautista reportedly threw a glass of water in the activist leader's face.

At one point, Aguinaldo again approached apparently to douse Constantino with another glass of water, witnesses said. But the glass broke after it ambushed to hit the tape recorder of GMA reporter Brenda Gorae.

Aguinaldo's side

Aguinaldo told this reporter later that he had to resort to water as conventional measures to stop Constantino from his ravings.

"Of course (I was mad). He was hysterically backtracked and he didn't want to stop," said Aguinaldo. "So he needed a dosage of cold water."

He recalled Constantino challenging him to a fistfight.

In a brief statement, fracas-no publisher hogged Bautista said: "It is unfortunate that Mr. Constantino got the better of him. He remains, by God's condition this type of behavior."

Constantino's side

Constantino believes he did nothing improper.

"As a private citizen I believe I had the right to say what I feel," Constantino told the hapless.

Constantino said he went to the House leaders' news conference without pretending he was a member of the media. He said he wanted to listen to what De Venecia had to say and so tell the press Charter change congressmen's side of the story. He also wanted to let the huge number of those who are in a dissenting view.

"I had no intention to figure in a fight," he said.

Of Aguinaldo, Constantino said: "I don't know him. I wish I did that he was a colonel now."

He said he may file charges of slander by deed against Aguinaldo although he described the incident between them as "inconsequential." With a report from Norman Bordadora

JDV offers Con-con; sets 72-hour deadline

From page A1

to convene a Con-con starting as early as Tuesday even without the participation of the Senate—which opposes it—has provoked widespread protests.

Outraged by the House move, leaders of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, the El Shaddai group of Bro. Mike Velarde and the Bangon Piety of evangelist Sen. Ed Villanueva have mobilized their supporters for a planned huge rally in Rizal Park on Dec. 15.

The Supreme Court in October struck down a separate plan by provincial governors and mayors loyal to Arroyo to stampede the Constitution through a signature campaign, or people's initiative.

Senators and CBCP officials have expressed preference for Con-con as a method of changing the Constitution, rather than through Con-ass, whose members were said to call for the abolition of the current members of the Lower House and the Senate.

Not a defeat

At yesterday's nationally televised press conference, De Venecia also said the House majority was dropping proposals to cancel the May 2007 congressional and local elections and reset them for November next year, when members to the projected new parliament would be chosen.

The May elections were so scrapped by other members of the House leadership, including those who vigorously pushed for Con-con even if they had to hold sessions until dawn.

De Venecia urged the Senate to pass a resolution within 72 hours calling for a Con-con whose members would be elected in May 2007 simultaneously with the midterm polls.

"On behalf of ... the Filipino people who clamor for constitutional reforms to provide the basic structures for political stability and economic growth, we challenge the Senate to resolve immediately the constitutional requirement of two-thirds vote of its members to call for the election of delegates in the constitutional convention," De Venecia said.

Con-con option

If the Senate failed to do so, the House would proceed with its Con-con plan, De Venecia said, adding this was in line with the Constitution.

Opposition lawmakers have ridiculed such a Senate-less assembly as an ouster than a rump gathering of obedient congressmen with no authority to change the Constitution.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said the decision by the De Venecia group to put off their Con-con scheme was "not by choice but by force of circumstances given the broad coalition lined up against their efforts to amend the Constitution."

Referring to the public protests against Con-con, Escudero said the majority's "superiority in numbers inside the House was not match by the numbers outside the House."

De Venecia said the decision was reached during a meeting with congressional leaders Friday afternoon in which dedicated to "consider all measures or variations to the existing constituent assembly scenario that the Senate has resolved in boycott—unreasonably in our view."

Nonpartisan effort

The Speaker appealed to the civil society and the Church "to pressure the Senate to put its votes where its mouth is—to produce the two-thirds vote for a constitutional convention that will enable Charter change to begin in earnest."

He said the House was willing to postpone Con-con slated for Tuesday while meeting the Senate's concerns.

He said if the Senate accepts the challenge, "then let this be the last time given the broad coalition lined up against their efforts to amend the Constitution."

If the Senate "ignore this challenge, then we say they are morally bound to join us in the constituent assembly."

De Venecia suggested that delegates on the Con-con—two per congressional district—should be elected during next May's polls to save about P9 billion in expenses.

No GMA role

"Why can't we all sit for joint sessions?" Why don't you ask them first?" the Speaker said, visibly irked when asked about his role under the envisioned parliamentary system.

De Venecia wouldn't say if he might be angling for the post of prime minister in a parliamentary government.

He denied that the shift to a Con-con was reached after Mr Arroyo had conflicted with him.

"I don't see the President did not talk to anyone of us," he said. "This is solely the initiative of Congress."

De Venecia said the move to amend Con-con would prove that the administration was "sincere" in pushing for modernization of the political system.

Erstwhile talk with the tycoon, De Venecia denied that some key members of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) had urged Mr Arroyo to drop her support for Charter change.

One of those present at that meeting said the hotseats that the local executives had found problems: Hostile because of the people. This is something that public officials cannot ignore. There is actual public outrage and I think the President saw this," he said.

"I think the reason Cha-Con-ass had a lot of difficulty is that they ignored the sentiments of the people and so when the people had shown their anger, they panicked," he added.

Missing the point

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines has not officially reacted to the resolution.

But Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, CBCP president and Jaro archbishop, said the House leadership "missed the point."

"The issue is not about the numbers. The issue is the people do not trust them. The people can't entrust Cha-cha to those who they do not trust," Quinto said, stressing that his words were his personal reaction and not CBCP's.

Lagdameo said the people were mystified by the motivation behind the rush to amend the Charter.

"We have lots of problems today such as the devaluation of the peso and the recent supertyphoon. Why don't we address these first?" he asked.

Apology first

"Charter change is not the problem of the common folk; those pushing for it seem to be obsessive-compulsive in doing so. There's something wrong here, why are they so insistent?" he said.

Asked if the CBCP would go ahead with its plan to stage a rally against Cha-cha on Friday, Quinto said the faithful should wait for the announcement of CBCP

Ulap changes tune

By Chito B. Fuentes
Reporter Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—A GROUP that engineered the move to change the Constitution through a people's initiative...and that was known for its loyalty to President Macapagal-Arroyo...seemed to be singing a different tune yesterday.

Now, they are supporting the holding of a constitutional convention (Con-con) as a method for changing the Charter.

Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, who is president of both the League of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap), described the move of Speaker Jose de Venecia to call for a constitutional convention as a "compromise" between the extremism rammed by an earlier House decision to rewrite the Charter through a constituent assembly—that is, with only the members of Congress themselves performing the job.

The compromise that de Venecia proposed was actually the usual

SCENE STEALING SIDESHOW: Ulap says the main points on Con-ass and the Con-con being put forward by De Venecia and his House allies at the press conference on Saturday to douse the flaring tempers of the day

SCENE STEALING SIDESHOW disrupts the main points on Con-ass and the Con-con being put forward by De Venecia and his House allies at the press conference on Saturday to douse the flaring tempers of the day

SCENE STEALING SIDESHOW disrupts the main points on Con-ass and the Con-con being put forward by De Venecia and his House allies at the press conference on Saturday to douse the flaring tempers of the day

taken by both the LPP and the Ulap. The two organizations are dominated by local pro-administration government executives.

Aumentado called on Church and militant groups to cancel their planned protest demonstration on Dec. 15 against Cha-cha.

"The future of our nation and their children depends to a make here," Aumentado said in a phone interview. "Let us refrain from anarchy. Otherwise, the momentum of progress and development we are experiencing now will grind to a standstill."

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

He said that in the spirit of Christmas, "it is time to reconcile and harmonize conflicting positions."

Aumentado said the House call for a Con-con was intended, in the first instance, to avoid the "extremism" of the Con-ass scheme being cut of hand.

"In Ulap and LPP are asking the Senate and the House to put concerning resolutions that would be a happy compromise in finding changes," he added.

"Stop Con-ass, don't just postpone it, his personalities and no timelines. I don't think they are in a position to impose any conditions," said Erredero, stressing that the majority was just looking for a graceful exit.

House Assistant Majority Leader Abraham Kahlil Mitra admitted that the House Con-con gambit was "a classic two-step backward, two-step forward strategy."

"It's a small step backward but a great leap forward (can be achieved)," said Mitra who filed last year a resolution favoring Con-con as the mode of amending the Charter, preparatory to the shift to a unicameral legislature under a parliamentary system.

JAPAN'S Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (second from right) and President Arroyo ride a third generation (3G) train bought with a Japanese loan after its inauguration.

4.6-quake hits Marinduque; no damage

A LIGHT EARTHQUAKE ON SATURDAY [illegible] province southwest of Manila rattled but did not cause any damage, officials said. The quake, measuring 4.6 on the Richter scale, was recorded at 4:26 p.m. and was centered about 14 kilometers west of Boac, capital of the province, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said. The tremor was also felt in the nearby province of Batangas. AP

RP trains roll with Japan aid

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo and visiting Japanese Prime Minister Abe cut a ribbon and poured champagne on one of the new commuter trains acquired through a soft loan from Tokyo at inauguration ceremonies held yesterday at the Light Rail Transit depot in Pasay City.

On the first day of his official visit, Abe shared with President Arroyo during the test ride to a Manila train station the billionth passenger.

The 19.9-billion loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation is payable in 30 years at 1 percent interest, with payments starting only after a 10-year grace period, the Light Rail Transit Authority said.

The loan was used to acquire 32 four-car trains, of which 8 had been delivered. Other funds would also be used to repair stations and install air conditioning in older [illegible] commuter coaches.

The new trains will increase the LRT-1's current capacity from 27,000 passengers to 40,000 per hour, the transit authority said.

In a statement, Arroyo said her administration was "proudly to deliver" to the Japanese government for the "substantial contribution" to the rail project.

"Commuters will undoubtedly enjoy not only reduced travel time, but increased comfort and less pollution as well," she said.

She expressed the hope the new trains "will provide the Filipino people more convenience in their everyday life to decongest[illegible] Manila." AP

We Buy Diamonds! Cash Paid Instantly

Guaranteed to give you the HIGHEST appraisal for your diamonds!

Only at JOAILLIER Fine Jewelry

Accepts diamonds 2 carats and up preferably round, emerald or old miner's (Antique) cut.

811-8805 • 815-2181 • 0926-7093812

READY FOR OCCUPANCY!

Francesca Tower

EDSA cor. Scout Barromeo, Q.C.

OPEN DAILY UP TO 10PM!

Only P5,000 to reserve!

P6,300 Initial Monthly!

Near EDSA MRT Station!

Also Available! Therese Tower 101 P. Tuazon, Cubao, Q.C.

NEWLY OPENED UNITS AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT OLD PRICES!!!

415-0082 • 415-9575

www.marreproperties.com.ph

INSTANT NEGOSYO!

EARN BIG, EARN FAST, EARN EASY

- Revolutionary & Unique Marketing System
- Easy-to-sell Highly Consumable Products
- Technology Driven Business System
- Huge Expandable Market
- Wide range of investments to choose from:
  Home-Based Business Package
  Territorial Franchise Business Package

BE A PIONEER

JOIN US IN OUR EXPANSION NATIONWIDE

QSD Franchise Group Inc.

FOR MORE DETAILS PLS CALL (02)3765303, (02)3765305

Text INSTANT <space> NAME, <space> CITY OR PROVINCE and send to:

- Globe (0917-4067166)
- Smart (0928-2741474)
- Sun (0922-5662508)

www.realsavvysgroup.com
sales@rsifranchise.com

Philippine Bank

The sequence of mysteries leading toward Christmas is when God willed to send His Son on earth. He passed through a mother, excellently prepared for the purpose, thus the feast of the Immaculate Conception. Mary personified the Catholic Church, not yet existing, in welcoming Christ, thus follows the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe who personifies the Church in the Apocalypse. We, in turn, must return to God by being a member of the Holy Family, the symbol of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. And become members by becoming a child of the Church, thus the feast of Sto. Nino.

Juan Diego was on his way to Mass on the feast of the Immaculate Conception when Mary appeared to him at Tepeyac. Here in the Philippines, the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed patroness of Manila in 1578 and of Nueva Caceres and Nueva Segovia in 1595.

Then it came to pass that the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was brought to the Philippines by the Legaspi expedition with Fray Urdaneta from Acapulco. And the Filipinos warmly received both her and the Church. The Augustinians, who placed themselves under the same patronage spread the devotion to her until she was irrevocably proclaimed by Pope Pius XI as official Patroness of the Philippines in a Papal Bull in 1935. Further reconfirmed by the late Cardinal Sin in Circular No. 2000-6p to the clergy of the Archdiocese of Manila (dated Nov. 22, 2000) among that the entry in the Order as to who the Principal Patroness of the Philippines was a mistake. To this day the mistake has not been corrected.

In celebration of the Obligatory Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Philippines, a Solemn High Mass shall be celebrated in the Private Oratory of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bo. San Isidro, Magalang, Pampanga, Dec. 12, 2006 at 9:00 a.m.

d

IT'S ALL OVER. Senior delegates to the Asean Summit flock to the international airport in Cebu to catch their flights home before the scorching sun and after the postponement of the main event was announced on Friday. —

Cebuanos' debut party …

Front page A1

of Cebu with the elite looks of a movie star, said putting off the summit in a mutually agreed date next month would give her more time to perfect the arrangements for the event.

Powerhouse showcase

Garcia and other leaders of the province had pulled out all the stops to make the P1 billion event a showcase of Cebu's potential as the Philippines' foremost provincial powerhouse.

In eight months, they said, using their own funds, reinforced a P500-million convention center on reclaimed land in Mandaue City.

The luxurious Shangri-La by the sea had been refurbished to accommodate the 10 Asean heads of state and government and their dialogue counterparts from Japan, China, South Korea, India, Australia and New Zealand.

Several thousand workers were mobilized to put on a new coat of asphalt, upstart and light up roads that had been badly rutted for years, throughout the length of the "ceremonial route" from the sparkling Cebu International Airport to the official quarters, security and meeting venues.

Unsightly slums were also demolished and hundreds of households banished, ends family given P25,000 or offered places in resettlement sites in the boondocks. The roofs of squatter shanties were removed and so they would look like Swiss chalets from the air for the arriving guests.

"This is one coming out party," Governor Lozada, the country's ambassador to Malaysia and a native son of Cebu, had said before a typhoon, designated locally as "bentong," rudely intervened.

"I don't think Cebu has seen anything like this before," he said. "It will be sometime before we'll see anything like this again."

Cebu is one of the Philippines' fastest developing provinces, known for its white sand beaches and diving spots, artisans, skilled technicians and professionals. The provincial capital is an educational center, popular for its medical schools, and host to one of the country's oldest industrial zones.

The governor was put on the spot when Burma, under intense international pressure to improve its human rights record, gave up its rotating chairmanship of Asean, a chore which naturally fell to the Philippines.

Garcia, a key school dropout who built up a string of prosperous businesses before joining the family's political franchise and taking over the governorship from her father, accepted the challenge of putting up a world-class convention center.

As what orchestration aces of which dreamland did I propose to conjure this imaginary castle with, the score of my magic wand?" was the question oppressed in her mind.

The also had to contend with politicians in this traditionally opposition bailiwick of this province resists.

For every brick, a bricklet

"For every stone we placed, a stone was thrown our way. For every brick we laid, a bricklet," she recalls.

The Cebu International Convention Center is one per 1.6M pesos cost done on what would have been the site of the summit, but rooms alone are already operational although the roof leaked during yesterday's downpour.

"It's a miracle," Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo gushed during Friday's inauguration of the concrete and steel edifice, which he described as having been wrought "in spite the Cassandras of doom and gloom."

Archbishop Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal said Cebuanos cannot solve problems if all they did was gripe.

"We need to let go of the usual crab mentality, of envy and malice, of nitpicking and fault-finding," he said. But more should also be done to address the problems of the impoverished, he said.

The prophets of doom included a small group of vociferous demonstrators that had been attempting to stage protests outside the CICC.

Protesters, main threat

They carried placards declaring in red paint, "Stop killings!" referring to alleged extrajudicial executions. Leftists claim that some 700 political activists have been extrajudicially executed since President Macapagal-Arroyo became President. (The fascists has claimed the figure as 206.)

Security officials said the main threat to the summit, with its theme of "One Caring and Sharing Community," was the protesters who threatened to overrun the 16th-century Basilica of Magellan if police attempted to stop them.

A force of 10,000 crack troops, including Presidential Security Guard snipers and sniffer dogs, was assembled to provide security for the delegates.

Despite the hiccup, officials remained optimistic.

"Cebu now may be the focus of a lot of conscious attention. They will now take a second look at the potential of Cebu, aside from seeing what we already have," said Garcia.

Signs of progress

"There's so much more potential here that can be tapped," she said, pointing to Cebu's outsourcing and information communication technology sectors.

"We bring in 11 percent of the total export earnings of the entire country. Last year we hit $4.7 billion," she said.

Until fairly recently, Cebu was just another economic backwater. When Corazon Aquino brought her civil disobedience campaign against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos to Cebu in 1986, the rally city in Parian on the south half little of the commercial hustle it has now. Apart from the fishermen's shopping mall, there were only one-story shops in the area.

Signs of progress are now everywhere, in new gleaming hotels, malls and business establishments, and wide boulevards. Local officials have also instituted zoning, preventing passenger jeeps and tricycles from entering the city proper, something Metro Manila's mayors have failed to do.

Trading, manufacturing

"Cebu has the least terrible toll in the Visayas," said Lozada. "Its if you can't plane you have to do something else. Cebuanos are just reading and manufacturing and it's been that way since Magellan arrived."

The attitude is people like Magellan has changed since then. Difference are opening their arms to foreigners — until Typhoon Reming intervened.

GMA: Stop Con-ass now

Front page A1

Lakas-CMD coalition, Speaker Jose de Venecia, by calling it "a bare-brained idea."

Defiance, one of the few pro-Lakas members of the Arroyo's official family, said the issue the issue was expressing concern over the public backlash the Con-ass strategy of the Lakas chiefs might cause.

The House strategy was to force the issue by convening a Con-ass even without the participation of the Senate, and voting Congress into an interim parliament that would mean postponing the midterm elections in May and extending the terms of the elected officials by six months, or up to November.

Defiance had reckoned that the President, fresh from the defeat of the people's initiative in the Supreme Court, could not afford to incur face again by pushing for a Con-ass that, he said, was evoking public outrage.

Humble pie

Forced to eat humble pie, members of the Lakas clique yesterday voted to downplay 7th Arroyo's abandonment of Con-ass just days after she had presided over its strategic planning more in Malacañang.

Its downplayed the President's retreat as part of "political maneuvering."

"That's why it's called Cha-cha … you can never forward, you can never backward," he said.

Tanada said the President's decision showed her "sensitivity" to the feelings of Church leaders, especially the local government of Naga, who had met with her on Thursday and warned her that Con-ass could spark broad public outrage.

Different beat

With the President's withdrawal of support, Con-ass' main disinterests in the Cabinet was marching to a different beat yesterday.

"We lead and support the position of the House to push on with the Con-ass on May 14 and 15," he said. We also join them as well as other sectors in urging the whole of Congress—the Senate and the House combined…to immediately call for a constitutional convention (Con-con)," Claudio said in a statement.

Claudio maintained "the administration has been consistent in its advocacy of Charter reform as the key to sustained economic growth and political stability."

He pointed out that the Palace had never advocated "a cancellation or deferment of the elections or the extension of the tenure of the incumbent officials."

He said there had "never been on the agenda and purpose of Charter change."

Asked if Ms Arroyo would be throwing her support behind Con-con as a means of amending the Charter, Ermita said, "We can't say our position yet because the President has not yet given us instructions. And she has never been discussed with her."

The Lakas faction in the Cabinet was apparently caught off-guard by the President's change of heart.

Late Friday afternoon, Bunye said Ms Arroyo was still all-out in her support of Con-ass despite opposition from the Church and her allies.

He said Ms Arroyo believed that she could still convince those opposed to Cha-cha to change their minds.

House-Senate issue

But according to Catanduanes Con. Leandro Verzosa, the President had not abandoned Con-ass.

Verzosa said that what Ms Arroyo had told members of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) during the Thursday meeting in Malacañang was that she could not talk to her allies in the Senate to convince them to take part in the House-organized assembly.

"She told us that she cannot and will not participate in an issue that is between the House and Senate," he said.

Verzosa said the local executives were discussing with Ms Arroyo possible ways of solving the impasse between the Senate and the House.

"It was implied that Malacañang could come in, and the President said, 'We can't come in to that,'" Verzosa said.

He said the discussion was conducted on the Palace Guest House after a dinner hosted by the President for the Ulap members.

He also said Mr Arroyo had told the Ulap members to talk with the senators about the latter's position on Con-ass. "He (Arroyo) believes that this is the right thing to do."

Unacceptable

Vice President Noli de Castro said the people would not accept Charter change unless there are legislation and that of the Senate.

De Castro said the House should realize that the "great debate" on Charter change should not be limited to its ballot-box barriers because, in the end, it was the people's voice that should prevail.

200-Palace vehicle convoy to deliver typhoon relief goods to Bicol

MALACAÑANG IS ORGANIZING A 200-VEHICLE convoy from Luzon to Bicol to deliver relief goods and other aid to the victims of typhoon "Reming."

Dubbed "Malasakitan ng Bayan Mega Mission," the convoy will leave Manila on Sunday at 10 a.m.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the organization of the convoy was approved during the National Disaster Coordinating Council meeting yesterday.

Ermita said the assembly point is the Quezon Memorial Circle Boulevard in Quezon City.

In Albay, disaster officials evacuated 70,000 residents from 41 villages in case typhoon "Reming" is expected to bring heavy rainfall that could trigger landslides and possible mudslides down Mayon volcano.

Villagers from Legazpi, Tabaco, Ligao, Oas, Guinobatan, Camalig and Sto. Domingo were brought to safe holding areas as early as 6 a.m. yesterday.

The most feared hazards were mudflows and landslides as river channels were already filled.

Joker Nolay of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council, said pickup points and holding areas were identified by officials as early as Friday night.

Gil C. Cabunoc Jr. and Cynthia D. Balana with Ephraim Apolinario, Rebecca Pepito and Bobby Lobrido, Inquirer Southern Luzon

KISS YOUR BAD BREATH GOODBYE

idec
The New Split Type Aircon
Wall-Mounted 1hp-P16,500
Floor Mounted 2hp-P25,500
Free Installation!
Call 243-2810, 241-4731, 0918-2482183

SOUTH AMERICA
CARNIVAL
ROYAL FLORA
ADAMS
EXPRESS TRAVEL

Christmas Winter Promo to Shanghai Beijing / Xian + Disneyland Day Tour
December 27-31 departure
5D Shanghai ₱199 ₱276
5D Shanghai ₱299 ₱379
2N Shanghai 2N Beijing ₱399 ₱479
2N Shanghai 2N Shenzhen ₱399 ₱499
4D Shenzhen ₱149
4D Shenzhen ₱209
2N Hongkong 1N Shenzhen ₱209
2N Hongkong 1N Shenzhen ₱269
1N Macau 1N Hongkong ₱219
1N Macau 2N Shenzhen ₱179
1N Macau 2N Shenzhen ₱239
1N Hongkong 1N Macau 1N Shenzhen ₱199
1N Hongkong 1N Macau 1N Shenzhen ₱259
2N Shanghai 2N Beijing 2N Shenzhen ₱399

Jessie Welch PAWNSHOP
Tel: 880-7368
Tel: 894-0262

PAN PACIFIC AESTHETIC INSTITUTE
is now offering and accepting applicants for its Two Year Training Program in Cosmetic Surgery

Committed to Quality of Life
Xceed GIFT PACK
Abbott

KitchenAid
FOR THE WAY IT'S MADE.
Celebrate this season with great food and excellent deals...
Enjoy 0% INTEREST
for 6 months for every purchase of KitchenAid stand mixers* using your BPI or Equitable credit card at participating Coleman store outlets.**
Promo period is from December 1 to December 31, 2006 only!

ALWAYS A DEAL.
Nibor Diamond Buying Office of the Philippines
NIBOR
FREE APPRAISAL
Highest Price and Instant Cash for antique and modern cut Diamond from 2 carats up to 30 carats.
Pawnshop owners and agents are welcome.
By Appointment only:
Mobile: (0917) 840-1571
INTERNATIONALLY EXPERIENCED GEMOLOGISTS
Located at:
PROMARK Jewelry, Inc.
2/F Mezzanine Floor
Shangri-La Hotel Makati

SKYNET TRAVEL
165 175 185
Packages

LA EUROPA CERAMICA INC.
Floor and Wall Tile Center
"Where Great Homes Come To Life"
3 CHRISTMAS PROMO OFFER
BUY 1 TAKE 1 PROMO
INVENTORY CLEARANCE
SPANISH CERAMIC & PORCELAIN TILES
CHINA FLOOR AND WALL TILES
ITALIAN FLOOR, WALL AND GRANITE TILES
PRICES AS LOW AS PHP 15.00 20CMX20CM
DIRECT 30% OFF DISCOUNT
ON ALL REGULAR ITEMS
SPANISH FLOOR AND WALL TILES
CHINA FLOOR AND WALL TILES
FREE DELIVERY with in Metro Manila
With only a minimum purchase of PHP 1,000.00
FREE ESTIMATE & LAY OUT

BREAKTHROUGH IN CANCER CURE
You don't have to die of cancer! The best cure for cancer is here in the Philippines! Not anywhere!
Sir Ton Agustin Herbal Scientist

PHILAM LIFE
On its 60th year, Philamlife renews its lifetime commitment to you and your family.
Since its establishment in 1947, Philamlife has always been your stronghold of financial security. Now, it continues to innovate life with a new generation of insurance products: Brilliance for your child's education, Longevity for your savings and protection, Abundance for your investment, and Leisure for your retirement.
Your future is brighter with Philamlife, the country's largest and most trusted life insurance company— backed by AIG, world leaders in insurance and financial services.
INNOVATE
60 YEARS
LIFE
AIG.
Call (02) 528-2028
www.ephilam.com
Only 1 out of 10 children finishes college.
Now, guarantee your child's education with BRILLIANCE.
Brilliance
Call (02) 528-2028
www.ephilam.com
Over 32 million Filipinos have no savings.
Now, enjoy life as you save with LONGEVITY.
Longevity
Call (02) 528-2028
www.ephilam.com
80% of Filipinos cannot afford to retire.
Now, secure a comfortable retirement with LEISURE.
Leisure
Call (02) 528-2028
www.ephilam.com
60% of Filipinos have savings that lose their value.
Now, maximize your earnings with ABUNDANCE.
Abundance
Call (02) 528-2028
www.ephilam.com

DUTY FREE PHILIPPINES

and

Globe

Christmas Shopping RUSH!

Masaya ang reunion ng pamilya!

Shop and win like crazy at DUTY FREE!

Get a raffle entry for every $100 purchase or simply buy a Globe AMAX P100 load together with your $75 purchase.

Promo Mechanics:

- All qualified travelers pursuant to the existing law (Regular Filipino Traveler, Overseas Filipino Workers, Balikbayans and Foreign Individual Travelers) may avail of the promo.
- For every $100 worth of purchase in the participating Duty Free outlets, a customer will be entitled to one (1) electronic raffle coupon.
- Customers with purchases of at least $75 will also be entitled to a raffle coupon if they buy a Globe AMAX P100 load from Globe booth located at the Fleetwood Atrium and Streetman Outlet.
- Receipts can be accumulated as long as purchases are made within the same transaction day and under the name of one registered traveler.
- Qualified customers will have a chance to win the following:

PRIZES:

GRAND PRIZE: House and Lot from Crown Asia
Two Iconic Crossovers
Bonus: Globe 1070 Prepaid Phone Kits

A participant can only win once. Should he/her name be drawn more than once, he/she will get bigger prizes. Prizes are not convertible to cash.

- Draw will be held at the Atrium Lobby of Duty Free Philippines Fleetwood on January 28, 2007 3PM.
- Winners will be notified through registered mail and announced in leading daily newspaper. Prizes can be claimed at the Marketing Department, Duty Free Philippines Fleetwood upon presentation of valid IDs. (Passport, Company ID, Postal ID, Driver's ID, Driver's License, SSS Card type, TIN Card type or PRC License).
- Winners will be given 60 days to claim their prize upon receipt of notification. Prizes not claimed within 60 days will be forfeited in favor of Duty Free Philippines with prior DTI approval.
- Employees of Duty Free Philippines, Globe Telecom, their suppliers and PR agencies, including relatives up to second degree of consanguinity are disqualified from joining the raffle promo.

Text RUSH to 2888 for free

(Available for Globe and TM subscribers only)

or visit www.dfp.com.ph

ISSN 0116-2442 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. 22 No. 2

OPINION

Have an your feedback: inquirer opinion@inquirer.com.ph

To the streets

THE RETREAT OF THE MAJORITY COALITION IN the House on the issue of a constituent assembly—touched as a challenge to the Senate to help form a constitutional convention in 72 hours—is a reminder that, in post-Marcos Philippines, Congress must contend with history's shadow: the parliament of the streets.

We hasten to add: As of this writing, the reverse Speaker Jose de Venecia and his allies sounded a very much a tactical one. Sen. Jinggoy Estrada may be alone, at this time, in thinking that De Venecia's surrealistic news conference yesterday was a clear sign that Charter change was dead. Sometimes, as in the case of zombies and vampires, death is overrated.

But it is clear that the gathering political storm over the House majority's brazen attempt to fast-track self-serving changes in the Constitution has spooked the leaders of the administration. Whether one thinks the unusual decision to postpone the 12th summit of Asean heads of government in Cebu was caused by the administration's need to contain the political inflow from the House majority's passage of the controversial resolution or not, public outrage is unmistakable, and growing.

Since the Hello Garci scandal broke last year, the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines had effectively given the Arroyo administration the benefit of the doubt. But after the House majority passed the resolution that, in its eyes, convened Congress as a constituent assembly even without Senate action, the bishops spoke out against the legislative woolies. They called for prayer rallies in the country's 80 dioceses, to impress upon the members of the majority coalition that a patent disregard of constitutional restrictions was not only illegal; because the House action benefited the congressmen directly, it was also immoral.

The country's two resident cardinals, both of whom are famously non-political, rallied on the Catholic faithful to take to the public square; the CBCP president, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo of Jaro, Iloilo, issued a statement that was impossible to misread as other than the faithful's marching orders.

In the last few days, they have been joined by Christian evangelist Eddie Villanueva and his Jesus is Lord Movement; the national network of religious congregations which had done so much to protect civil liberties during the martial law regime; and many Protestant churches and, not least, the pivotal Iglesia ni Cristo, which has demonstrable political clout.

They all followed the lead of Catholic charismatic evangelist Mike Velarde, the famous founder of the El Shaddai Catholic renewal group, who had warned the House majority, on the eve of the fateful vote, that while he had always been for Charter change, he would not support any attempt to change the Constitution without the participation of the Senate.

It is fair to say that this array of forces is the most formidable coalition seen since January 2001—that is to say, since Erap. Some critics have aired their discomfiture over the role religious leaders and movements are again playing in the parliament of the streets, like the outrage over the House majority's legislative coup is not religious in character; it is eminently moral.

The idea of democracy depends on the concept of limitation. The branches of government must check-and-balance one another; the Bill of Rights serves to protect the citizen from the state; judges should exercise self-restraint and wait for a legal controversy to reach them. And—today's crux of the matter—a bicameral system requires both chambers to agree on a measure or an action.

The idea that only one chamber can convene Congress into a constituent assembly is absurd on its face; De Venecia's House has acted as though the Constitution has already been revised, and the Senate consigned to history. This act is not only patently illegal and unconstitutionally leftist; it is also immoral—the naked use of power to serve one's own ends. The question that haunted Philippine politics two generations ago has returned to unnerve all of us: "What are we in power for?"

We support the religious leaders' appeal to fill the public square with our cries of outrage and our acts of supplication. It is clear, again, to remind the administration that, like the public's patience, the limit has finally been reached.

Publisher **Isaac Tiglao**
Editor-in-Chief **Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc**
Managing Editor **Joe Ma. D. Rosales**
Associate Editor **Rolando O. Tolentino**
Assistant Editor for Features **Rosario S. Garcellano**
News Editor **Antonio T. Enriquez Jr.** • Chief, News Day Desk **Neil G. Pasion**
Opinion Editor **Juan V. Arcos**
Sunday Editor **Francisco S. Sandoval Jr.**
Senior Desk Editor **Jose F. Sonido Jr.**
Editor at Literature **Antonio Enriquez**
Chief Photographer **Ernie S. Sabayachi**
Art & Design Director **Grace A. Velarde**

Board of Directors **Hermie R. Pasion**
President **Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez**
Executive Vice President **Diana G. Nuyda**
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing **Rhoel G. Ramirez**
Vice President for Finance **Ruth K. Guarin**
Vice President for Operations **Jesse Jesus B. Tee**

Publisher Emeritus **Letizia Kalaw Tiro**

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied in any form or by any means without the permission of the publisher.

A time for change?

EDITORIAL

IN QUOTING THE METAPHOR THAT "THE Constitution must be firm and immovable, like a mountain amidst the strife of storms or a rock in the ocean amidst the raging of the waves," I did not mean that the Charter must be permanent and immutable like the Ten Commandments. I believe it; Justice Cardozo's gentle reminder that "the iron that darkens for the night is not the journey's end. The Constitution, like the traveler, must be ready for the morrow."

As Justice Windeyer put it, "the political or philosophical upheavals of one generation is doubted by the next and entirely discarded by the third. The race moves forward constantly and no Canute can stay its progress." Canute was a wise king who, impatient with his servile courtiers who said he could do anything, took them to the seashore where he showed how the waves disobeyed him when he ordered them to stop still.

Another figure worth recalling from the ancient myths is Procrustes, a tyrant who tied his victims to fit his bed and stretched their legs if they were too short and cut them off if they were too long. This has led to the legal maxim that the Constitution should not be made to fit the bed of Procrustes as the challenging legal yardstick of its validity and efficacy. The prevailing view now is that the nation, and the Constitution that governs it, cannot remain static.

One advantage of the written Constitution is its permanence or its capacity to resist capricious or subliminal change dictated not by legitimate needs but only by passing fancies, temporary passions or occasional infatuations with ideas or personalities, mostly unknowing, shall a document is not likely to be tempered with constant political-expediency pursuits of ambitious, or agitation for its ill-advised amendments or replacement.

SEPARATE OPINION

Dagohoy A. Cruz

That is the reason for the difficult process devised for the amendment or revision of the fundamental law. The purpose is to discourage it almost except when it is absolutely necessary as found by the people with their welfare as their uncompromising and solitary criterion. Pride of authorship is only a minor objection. It is ultimately the higher purposes of the nation that will determine if the changes proposed should be authority undertaken at fitful speed.

The Philippines has over the past several years been engrossed over the need to cha-cha examination of the 1987 Constitution and the methods to effect its change. One of these, the initiative, has recently failed, but the two other processes have yet to be tried and the first of these is gaining ground among its advocates. The House of Representatives is now working for this alternative choice, facetiously called the Con-ass. It is the intervention of Congress into a constituent assembly to propose a revision of the Constitution with the concurrence of three-fourth of all its members.

The meaning of the core requirement is a basic issue dividing the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate, which is likely to be abolished with the establishment of an unicameral instead of bicameral, is unwilling to join the Con-ass. The House of Representatives says it can function by itself and muster the three-fourths vote from its membership alone, without the Senate. The Senate contends that Congress is a bicameral body and its two Houses should act together unless otherwise clearly provided.

The conflict is between the letter of the law that should be interpreted literally and the spirit of the law that should discharge its real intention. Ultimately, it is the Supreme Court that will clarify the incredible negligence committed by the framers of the 1935 Constitution who acutely neglect the pertinent provisions of the 1973 Constitution that established a unicameral Batasang Pambansa.

I am among the majority of our people who feel that the present Constitution should be recommend with a view to correcting its many shortcomings as revealed by numerous experiences over the past 20 years. In previous articles in this column, I have mentioned several of its human failings, not to simply harp but in a sincere effort to contribute in the improvement of what after all is the paramount law of the Philippines. It deserves the concern and respect of all of us citizens as the imperiled guarantor of our rights and inviolable expectations.

But I do not think this is the proper time to amend or revise it. The nation is too politicized by partisan hostilities and suspicions of personal ambitions that cannot insure an objective study of the changes that can make the Constitution an effective instrument for the enhancement of the common welfare. This humble citizen believes that we should first wait for the dust to settle after all this political turmoil now gripping us, before we can sit down together in peace and harmony to chart a better future for our country.

Remember, let us forget our present animosities and share in the joy and goodwill of the Santa Yuletide.

Keep right, go straight

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THERE IS A STORY ABOUT A PRIEST WHO told his parishioners that he would be preaching about the crucifying the following Sunday. In preparation for that, he urged them to read Chapter 17 of the Gospel of Mark. When he asked the following Sunday how many read Mark Chapter 17, almost every hand went up. Whereupon he said: "Mark has only 16 chapters. Let's pretend now with our topic this morning about the sin of lying."

* * *

In today's Gospel (Lk. 3, 1-6), we are told that John the Baptist came out of the desert proclaiming a baptism of repentance, echoing the words of the prophet Isaiah: "Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight His paths." Now, more than ever, we must heed these words, especially the leaders who continue to lie, manipulate, abuse and exploit our people. Let Advent be a real time for soul-searching and reckoning for all of us. Let's all go back to sincerity and truthfulness without which there can be no real turning on.

* * *

The problem with those who lie is that they actually and naively believe that they can go on and on with their lying, and continue to get away with it. Wrong. They will be uncovered, and they will suffer the fate of the liars who went before them.

* * *

When a liar is cornered or battered, the ideal scenario is that he kneels down in humility and repents. But often, that is not the case for often the liar is also a good escape artist, and relies on more lies just to get out of trouble. To them hope for "liars" fee, there is, and that is if they listen to the voice of God within, to hang on the conscience is silenced, mollified and disregarded, there can be no real conversion.

* * *

I was in Cebu last week for an Advent retreat. Invited at the Pink Sisters' convent. What struck me were the instant lies filling others being undertaken all over the city in preparation for the Asean Summit. Just like our Advent preparation which are often just external and temporary. Let us all strive for constant, total, internal conversion.

* * *

Last Dec. 8, I was at Dinalupihan, Bataan upon the invitation of Mayor Joel Payumo for an Advent recollection with teachers. It was our way of honoring these hardworking and often unnoticed and neglected public servants. On a personal note, it was my way of honoring my mother on her 85th birthday. For this, we took a public school teacher for 30 years, most of which were spent in a small barrio called Bani in Pangasinan. Indeed, it is the family and not so much those in high places that make a difference in people's lives.

* * *

Last we forget, there are real people with real and urgent needs this very moment, especially our brothers and sisters in flood. Let us not become like our politicians who, instead of helping our suffering people, are so busy in helping themselves and their political future. Instead of serving, they are so busy lining self-serving provisions for themselves. Shame! Shame on us, too, if we listen only to our personal and family projects and forget our contract for the love we must do. Christmas.

* * *

A lot of things will unfold these coming days that could affect us as a nation, but please remember that in the end goodness **will triumph over evil.** Let us not lose heart when it seems that truth, justice and goodness don't have a place anymore in our society. Let us hold to the promise that "every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low. The winding roads shall be made straight and the rough ways made smooth, and all flesh shall see the salvation of God." "I (ask a lowly, lesser prophet like John the Baptist, and not the politicians like Tiberius, Caesar, Pontius Pilate, Herod and Philip who made struggle the path. Likewise in our time, it will be people like you and me, marching and walking for the truth—not our so-called leaders—who will make straight the path of our nation.

* * *

We heard the sad news about the brutal murder of Assistant Solicitor General Nestor Bellaflo and his son Brandon. Diane Veron, she was a humble, simple and sincere woman. Police are investigating if the murder was "work related." Homeless, honest and truthful people are presumed, harassed, or even eliminated in our country.

* * *

Tomorrow sent me a text message wishing me a Merry Christmas, which he said might be postponed this year in this country, where lies and deceit seem to be perpetrated and where truth can be rarely manipulated. **Merry Christmas everyone!**

* * *

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. (2 Timothy 4:7) me the Word through everyday stories and reflections, one, DIOSDADO Consumer and send to 2948 for Globe/Sun or 2990 for Smart. God bless you. Manu Mary loves you!

* * *

A moment with the Lord:
Lord, remind me to keep right and go straight. Amen.

Random notes

REVELLE

Ramon J. Farolan

TRAVEL ADVISORIES: SO FAR, THE UNITED States, Great Britain and Australia have issued travel advisories warning their citizens against traveling to the Philippines. Japan's travel agency of tabloid threats. Let us hope that anonymous sources are correct. It would be disastrous for the nation and for the reputation of security and intelligence forces if anyone had terrorist intentions during the Pope's visit and they were not detected in advance. Terrorists need an amazing knack and dexterity.

One last word. My sister also keep up our guard here in Metro Manila. With all attention focused on Cebu, security services should be the nation's capital would have the same effect as the country's image.

Last breaks: The summit has been postponed for next month. Somehow I am reminded that the last time it was postponed was in 1986 when, in December 1985, there were serious security concerns which brought up proposals to postpone the summit. After much discussion and consultations with American security teams, it was decided to push through with the December schedule, but under the thirteen security blanket one could imagine.

* * *

Glasses change looks: some dissect from the

paperclip. Ironically it was difficult to insert a quorum to get the main meeting. Envelopes were distributed — P50,000 and accompanied by a Christmas card. And in Pasay losing cabinet change, Rep. Christmas card pic, indicated that the Pasay type also represented Christian greetings from the "Boss"! After much grumbling, a thicker envelope was prepared, this time with not a Christmas card. The train slowly began to move, gaining momentum as the passengers nodded their heads. Separate Christmas greetings will be sent to another envelope at the appropriate time. And if necessary, another one for the New Year.

The new committees — minus the bonus train — is headed by none other than Rep. Ed Vicente Fariñas, a Harvard graduate who was elected in 1968 and Roberto Lastimoso, Class 1969. The Land Transportation Office is headed by Reynaldo Berroya, Class 1960, while the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board is chaired by Rodriguez Lantion, Class of Class of 1960. They may all be qualified for their posts, but neither some kind of curve ball is in the air.

Metrobus is positively calling a command sec-

* * *

Department of Tarlac Chamber: One of the most influential Cabinet departments in our government today is the Department of Transportation and Communications headed by Tarlac Chamber of the military alphabet lingo.

The secretary is Leandro Mendoza, Phil Class 1969. An undersecretary and assistant secretary are also from the same class: Jesus Garcia, Class 1968 and Roberto Lastimoso, Class 1969. The Land Transportation Office is headed by Reynaldo Berroya, Class 1960, while the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board is chaired by Rodriguez Lantion, Class of Class of 1960. They may all be qualified for their posts, but neither some kind of curve ball is in the air.

Metrobus is positively calling a command sec-

* * *

Bureaucrats and their underlings — the cream rises to the top, the scum sinks to the bottom. Take the case of Jaime Ongpin, Chairman of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) and Undersecretary of Labor. Ongpin is a Harvard graduate who was elected in 1968 and Roberto Lastimoso, Class 1969. The Land Transportation Office is headed by Reynaldo Berroya, Class 1960, while the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board is chaired by Rodriguez Lantion, Class of Class of 1960. They may all be qualified for their posts, but neither some kind of curve ball is in the air.

Metrobus is positively calling a command sec-

* * *

Iraq Study Group (ISG) Report: The long-awaited ISG Report, prepared by a bipartisan group of former officials and Congressmen, has been released. It gets rising marks in almost all pockets of the Bush administration regarding Iraq.

As of today, the war in Iraq has already lasted longer than the World War II and is costing the United States almost $8 billion a month, with more expenses coming to be needed. The final cost is estimated to run as high as $2 trillion, in terms of casualties, the report foresees no official end to the war, but a gradual withdrawal of combat soldiers, but the civilian fatalities on the Iraqi side make it one of the bloodiest for any nation.

Among the ISG's 79 recommendations are for negotiations with Syria and Iran over the future of Iraq and a reduction in the size of the US troops involved in training Iraqi Army units. "We do not recommend a 'stay-the-course' solution," said James Baker III, co-chair of the group.

* * *

Invasion each time he maintains his staff and agency heads for a meeting. Just like the old times! The Transportation and Trade also headed by a retired Air Force general and the Trade Czar. Let us hope that Tony efficient, a non-as agency of the DOTC.

In the family, Secretary's cousin, the Rev. Ellen or Teodoro of San Juan. Ramapo is a university for pastors of the Living Hope of Calvary, a Baptist congregation in Evanston, Illinois. Teodoro went as far the head of the Bible-based Hope for the World congregation before his posting in the United States. Aside from being the first Filipino pastor of Living Hope, a previous pastorate of Teodoro — Teodoro also serves as the chaplain of the Evanston police department and is a member of the board of the Midwest Baptist Conference in the Upper Heights, Illinois.

Bishop Dinzie Teodoro, national director of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, is an older brother of Ellen.

* * *

Iraq Study Group (ISG) Report: The long-awaited ISG Report, prepared by a bipartisan group of former officials and Congressmen, has been released. It gets rising marks in almost all pockets of the Bush administration regarding Iraq.

As of today, the war in Iraq has already lasted longer than the World War II and is costing the United States almost $8 billion a month, with more expenses coming to be needed. The final cost is estimated to run as high as $2 trillion, in terms of casualties, the report foresees no official end to the war, but a gradual withdrawal of combat soldiers, but the civilian fatalities on the Iraqi side make it one of the bloodiest for any nation.

Among the ISG's 79 recommendations are for negotiations with Syria and Iran over the future of Iraq and a reduction in the size of the troops involved in training Iraqi Army units. "We do not recommend a 'stay-the-course' solution," said James Baker III, co-chair of the group.

* * *

Fools rush in

AGENCY IS IN RUSH. ITS COCONUT INDUSTRY IS DEMOLished, and its people dig in the muck for anything they can use or wear or sleep on. The province was just recovering from the damage "Milenyo" wrought when "Reming" emerged in and destroyed the little that was left. In the town, a bewildered man in a yellow windbreaker stands on a flat plain of mud, on envelope of debris a few inches his knees.

He has just come back from vacation, the envelope holds all the money he saved and scrimped to bring home to his family this Christmas. But they are all gone now, and he does not know

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

whom these bodies are. Children wailing over lost fathers, and mothers looking for toddlers crowd into shelters with no electricity, little potable water and just the clothes on their backs.

And what's the devastation was to us locally, the congressman of Albay's first district, Joey Salceda, was close enough to the wee hours of the morning. The representative, however, was not in Albay calling along with volunteers. Neither was he tallying his people or attempting to raise more funds. The good representative was in Manila, along with his followers, some like over national TV, to voice an ill-timing his very existence the law and rescue's cabinet's gullible — on many occasions — members of the House of Representatives were more of a groaning mirror than, say, a few thousand of his doting constituents.

Late Tuesday night to midnight, the kindly gentleman from the House of Representatives decided to ignore the fact that Congress is composed of two chambers. They pushed on changes to the House rules, claiming that all that was needed to change the Constitution was a majority vote from Congress. Their definition of Congress, however, is quite overwhelming. They wanted a vote from a combined majority of the 221 representatives and 23 senators.

There is a reason why there are two houses in Congress, and why there need to be quorums in each of both Houses and Senate. It is because one is supposed to balance the other, and to the presumption that the election of senators in one house can be countered by wider votes in another. That there are only 24 men and women in the Senate does not make them any less powerful than the House of Representatives, who are elected by district, as in the case with members of the House, but by the entire country. Their power to veto is just as strong as that of the 220-strong members of the House. What the House is essentially doing is reducing the power of the Senate to a paltry percentage of theirs.

I am not against any sort of constitutional change. What I am against is the sacrificing of law and precedent and basic rules in the name of constitutional change. The way the shift to a parliamentary government is packaged is as if it is the last and only way to drag the country out of the mire. As one supporter so succinctly puts it, "We're desperate for change. Change is happening. Let's not let the senators be the ones to put on the brakes." This sort of rhetoric is what serves to justify a belief that anything can be done with impunity for the sake of an ambiguous "greater good."

Defenders of the unconstitutional consensus assemble have been applauding the audacity of their friends' bid in the House. "It takes a lot of courage today for one to be capable of convening a constituent assembly," says one stalwart advocate. "The elaborate strategy unfolded Tuesday night from at least be credited for audacity ... audacity is needed to run through the constitutional ring."

Another columnist justifies this "audacious" move as "the only ways out of our political gridlock, where both chambers of Congress as well as Malacañang and the Senate are constantly at odds."

These supporters argue as if audacity is a fundamental good, as if such big words will decolonize the stench of the House's underhanded dealings. Perhaps, it would be best to remember that audacity is not the only ingredient needed for the screams of those who are little more than parliamentary thugs. At best, audacity means daring, as wrong, a to without any weakness and shameless boldness with arrogant disregard for manner or principles.

To defend audacity as a virtue in a vacuum is a dangerous thing. Martial law authorities when he dropped the axe for all intents and purposes, and the Senate's audacious refusal to be kept gagging, bare and hurrying chaos by the thousand. And it was great audacity that led hijackers to crash planes into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. Audacity always comes with the excuse of a supreme cause and it is dangerous in the hands of people who have convinced themselves that they are capable of saving the country. Audacity is not only on that the elite of the street will not push someone's handling and say he's enabled, it also exists on that idiom straight the House without grab members and say they are enabled.

One congressman was interviewed on television, and had the audacity — and I use the word appropriately — to complain that the public was judging the House resolution members unjustly with blanket statements referring to their appalling morals. Another columnist goes to the air to say that these congressmen were being "unfairly demonized," when all they wanted was for the senators "to [remain committed to the] principle of the supremacy of the elected political institutions, and to disown with the House members to fulfill their constitutional function to amend the Constitution."

There great fans in the House of Representatives are merely fighting against those who offer "brave resistance" because of "mutual interests." The rest of humanity is in danger that the House's move, but neither will it buy the ridiculous assumption that the new and women who ordered the push based him your have a monopoly on patriotism.

Many have spoken against the Concave, both church and civic groups have expressed their outrage. The future of social institutions of the Philippines seems to have realized the impact of the House's move, and has appealed directly to the Chief Executive. Today, Speaker Jose de Venecia came out with his statement and has joined in his campaigning house, it seems as if audacity has its limits.

In Filipino, we have a word for it, and it is one that needs no definition. We call it *pangahas*.

* * *

E-mail the author at pat.evangelista@gmail.com

Joe and his gang scale a mountain

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

JOE AND HIS GANG DECIDED ONE DAY TO scale a mountain. The team's second-in-command and foreman chose the most prominent one in their path. There was the town watched by Frank, Mary and Dick who didn't want them to reach the top because Joe and his minions would push them off the mountain. They were the watchers-over men in valleys who would give their warning, through, believed they were the guardians of the mountain. There were even women-warriors inhabiting the mountain slopes—some members, some friends, some lovers—who zealously protected Joe and his gang.

But Joe and his gang had an important friend—Ading Ginoong, who looked it over the mountain and wisely gave them its weaknesses, supplies and moral support because she believed Joe and his gang would help across her trickery down on the mountain.

Joe and his gang first explored the Gumbas path, the easiest route to the mountaintop, but they wouldn't even get past the lower slopes where Frank and his friends waited. "Get out of our way, you greedy grasping so-called watchdog ground-huggers!" Joe shouted while all the while he, Frank and his gang stood their ground, attacking among themselves.

Joe finally, and turned to his allies, the motley who, at one time or another, were around the mountain's slippery slope. "The only way we can get around Frank and his friends is to get the minions, lovers and birds on our side," the mutiny Joe to his subjects. "Only then will we have control of ground we have been stymied from and will get acquainted if they leave Ading Ginoong and I are behind you," he said.

* * *

With the stakes high and reflecting around the team, Alibaba, Cuneo and Boris, their sidekick Bruno filled with promises of a better future for the birds and lovers, their reluctance began tempting the members who were anxiously guarding their interests.

"If you would only let Joe and his gang up the mountain, they will be able to provide only the abundant fruit-and-nut trees and all manner of goodies and everyone will have a better life," Bruno the snake.

Joe and his gang finally reached the Gumbas path, the easiest route to the mountaintop, but they wouldn't even get past the lower slopes where Frank and his friends waited. "Get out of our way, you greedy grasping so-called watchdog ground-huggers!" Joe shouted while all the while he, Frank and his gang stood their ground, attacking among themselves.

Joe finally, and turned to his allies, the motley who, at one time or another, were around the mountain's slippery slope. "The only way we can get around Frank and his friends is to get the minions, lovers and birds on our side," the mutiny Joe to his subjects. "Only then will we have control of ground we have been stymied from and will get acquainted if they leave Ading Ginoong and I are behind you," he said.

* * *

With the stakes high and reflecting around the team, Alibaba, Cuneo and Boris, their sidekick Bruno filled with promises of a better future for the birds and lovers, their reluctance began tempting the members who were anxiously guarding their interests.

"If you would only let Joe and his gang up the mountain, they will be able to provide only the abundant fruit-and-nut trees and all manner of goodies and everyone will have a better life," Bruno the snake.

The snakes managed to win over some conservative members, but a lot more birds, lovers and monkeys remained indifferent to the snakes' call. Some of the creatures even managed to get together and agree to sign a petition which they brought to the school principal out of their concern.

"The snakes have been using underhanded tactics on us," they complained. "They wished some monkeys into doubting the love of their partners. They have even used their powers to hurt some birds who were getting hungry. They even scattered the members that the birds and lovers would call their souls of heiresses! We were among those who were fooled by Bruno, but now we are placed upon each other!"

The panel dean of the monsoon listened very carefully and talked among themselves. They didn't all agree, but they had to admit that they cannot the creatures' petition. So they commanded Joe and his gang, who were carousing with the snakes, and told their excused assembly. "We're a very organized bunch, let's take this path to the top of the mountain."

* * *

JOE was livid and threatened to push the snail panel dean off the face of the mountain. But he let the brilliant idea of launching a balancing through the Gumbas path, pushing Frank, Mary and Dick and the others off guard.

Recently, there was another name in the top of the mountain. Joe called the Gumbas, but this time he was difficult and hazardous, and Joe and his gang weren't sure of where it would end. So they decided to give the Gumbas road one last try.

They found the first of hardships in the dead of night, tying ropes around each other's waists because the gang members were apt to sneak off into nightmares or karaoke joints when they weren't poked to each other. A few members tried to stop Joe and his gang from their foolhardy mission, but the gang's rope-and-tread formula got way through to mostly pets. They almost made it.

But then the birds and insects, sensitized by the storms in the middle of the night, began to fly about the sky and make a big commotion in every path of the way. The monkeys down like what they were hearing and seeing, and began to pelt the gang with rotten bananas. The whole mess went sky high.

Joe and his gang's easy path had turned into a slippery slope, and the rocks and stones thrown their way like banana peels and monkey droppings threatened to bring them down to the ground.

From up on the mountaintop, Ading Ginoong saw what was happening and calmed her band of her beleaguered allies.

* * *

With no Joe and his gang here a many years. They shouted out to Frank, Mary and Dick and the other guys in the posse that they were not to panic. Because the snakes' plan would be unsuccessful. "We assured to march up with you along the Gumbas path all the while, but we just wanted to say. If the Gumbas way was worth exploring. So why not join us now?"

But Frank, Mary and Dick and their friends remained unconvinced. They all left their wives in all, they asked themselves, when no one was paying attention to Joe and his gang anymore?

The last we heard, Joe and his gang were still at it. Years of experience with Joe and his gang stumping all over the forest, finding them and sending snakes to harangue them had not only failed to lighten their load, but had made them angry. And the two-night land on the Gumbas path was not more proof of the nefarious intentions of that duplicitous gang.

Meanwhile, Ading Ginoong was inside her hut planning. She had invited some friends from nearby mountains to visit and she had chanced her hut and made her garden, but she did discern up for Joe and his gang's return. Ading Ginoong had designs on the mountain, which her house and garden is a shambles, she had no choice but to call off the party.

* * *

Sideshow to a political crisis

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

THE 2013 ITEMS SHALL BE DECIDED BY EACH THE House of Representatives, acting alone and without the concurrence of the Senate, exercise the constituent powers of Congress? The House majority says it can. Constitutionalists millions to contest. The controversy is now before the Supreme Court, the in late-making powers, are lodged in Congress as a bicameral structure.

Section 1, Article VIII, of the 1987 Constitution states: "Any amendment to, or revision of, this Constitution may be proposed by (1) The Congress, upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members; or (2) A constitutional convention."

The proponents of unicameral action in the House of Representatives are relying on the fact that the provision only speaks of a vote of three-fourths of the members, and does not specify a separate vote for each house. To Joaquin Bernas, one of the framers of the 1987 Charter, says that this formulation is good enough to allow for joint voting. He opposed a bicameral requirement. The proposal for a unicameral Congress lost by one vote in the 1986 Constitutional Commission.

It is remarkable that the Commission forbids lawmakers from voting jointly in a session, from separating by more than three days or from changing terms "without the consent of the other." Yet, on the more fundamental matter of proposing changes to the basic law of the land it has left the matter open to doubt. Is it not the case that to go about address the other's concurrence. If this omission is intentional, it doesn't make sense.

But, let us assume that the framers of the Charter intended for it to be that way. Still, this does not answer the basic issue in dispute: whether we should, as a body, whether in participate in an amendatory or vote initiated by the other for the purpose of proposing amendments or revisions of the Charter. Today's opposition says that Congress is not the first vote, the two chambers must decide as separate bodies if they want to participate in a joint session. That's too narrow and reductionist a reading, it is the rationality of a unicameral body.

Lawyer in the language of the dying days in members speak of a decadent system, as if they are in legislative circles. They talk of new beginnings and modern advances as if these things automatically produced new types of leaders and new citizens. Words from Sheila Macapagal Arroyo herself gradually distances herself from the Senate-based opposition once it is massively opposed to the moves.

But, as in revolutionary France, a strong political current is pushing my country in the direction of constitutional change. Born of disgust with elections and corruption, and of the widespread belief of those very political upheavals, it is impressive how changing the system itself is the basis. Federal political forces some that gathering events, and are trying to harness it to their own ends. They seek to shape it, and channel it to familiar directions. But, having been exposed, they will not succeed.

The alternative to Charter change is not the May 2007 elections. The alternative to a first day is not just a Con-con. Most of any electoral overtime, we need to clean up the entire electoral system, the present predominance of the Comelec staff at all levels, and plug the loopholes that have made wholesale manipulation of the results of past elections possible. In the long term, we have to begin pushing for an alternative that seriously addresses the issue of poverty. Charter change, by itself, will not solve the problem of poverty. This must be accompanied by a massive reorientation of public funds, from current preoccupations to the needs of the poor.

The latest stains of the region in the House may have ignited a collective outrage that will make people see the dangers of a crude parliamentary system. But, as in the past, the anger will subside, the political crisis will end, but one issue it will finally be laid to the door of GMA, where all began.

* * *

Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE

TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to jcsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph

Edna Juan N. Sarmiento Jr.

Asean economic community: Which way?

THE ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS DECLARED IN BALI three years ago that by 2020 the group shall be one Asean Community based on three integration pillars—economy, security and sociocultural. The overwhelming focus of Asean efforts is on the formation of an economic community which is defined as one regional market characterized by the free flow of goods, capital and services.

The Asean Economic Community will be preceded by the full integration of 11 priority sectors by 2010. In Kuala Lumpur this year, Asean economic ministers declared that the Asean Economic Community could be realized even by 2015.

In the meantime, Asean is rushing the drafting of an Asean Charter for approval in 2007 or 40 years after the group's formation. An eminent persons group (EPG), which included former President Fidel Ramos, conducted national and regional consultations this year. A technical working group shall be mandating the EPG's recommendations into a draft Charter.

How realistic is the integration vision given the trajectories of development in the region? What are the obstacles to integration? What are the alternative approaches to integration?

Put people at center of integration

By Christopher Ng

AFTER FOUR DECADES, "FOR some leaders are now drafting the regional working Charter," the head, we are also lining up measures to hasten the integration of the 10-member community into one. Asean community based on three pillars of cooperation—economic, security and socio-cultural. Accordingly, Asean shall be a "community of caring societies," committed to "reducing the vulnerability of the disadvantaged groups."

We have no quarrel with these fine-sounding goals. However, these lofty objectives coincide with certain realities in the emerging regional integration process, which is narrowly-based and top-down. Like globalization in general, regional integration has benefited largely a few economic players, principally the global transnational corporations and the big home-grown Asean corporations, which can now freely go in and out of the individual economies according to need in a cross-border fashion. So-called Japanese electronics and auto TNCs now treat the region as one production-distribution market, benefiting some countries as operational assembly centers and others as export platforms for components.

The truth is that many workers and farmers have not felt any positive change in their lives as a result of globalization and regional integration. Many participants in the old neoliberal orthodoxies such as privatization and deregulation in the name of "labor flexibility" measures like short-term hiring or deployment by "labor dispatching companies," which help investors squeeze maximum profits from underpaid and unorganized workers.

In export processing zones, workers are generally in their 20s and 30s because they are "exhausted" before they reach age 40. Yes, area leaders are worrying. However, many are unable to create enough jobs to offset the job losses in old industries which are collapsing. Worse, a never-ending process of downsizing is taking place all over the region due to a never-ending series of mergers-acquisitions-consolidations among the big banks, insurance and various industries being spurred on by the sense of liberalization and globalization.

Value-chain production

Asean is also promoting "value-chain production network," which some Southeast TNC investors are to relocate plants from country to country in search of cheap labor—thus defeating a "race to the bottom" among capitalists. The objective for private-sector has also put jobs in the public sector on the brink, especially in countries with a large number of state-owned enterprises.

In the countryside, the situation is even more critical. There are pockets of growth in agriculture-based countries, principally Asean's new TNC investments in export-oriented crop production. But the ordinary small farmers and fisherfolk are vulnerable not only to the vagaries of the weather but also to the monopoly control by the big traders, the TNC distributors of farm inputs and the global production from the rich subsidizers—the United States, European Union and Australia.

3D jobs

As a result, rural farm incomes have been shrinking, while the array of the landless and jobless rural poor has been swelling, spreading the Asean "3DC" employee with numerous migrant women in the 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous and dull), and in the developed Asean and other countries.

In short, regional integration has enabled many in the Asean. Thus, we are alienated more the otherwise as the pace of the Asean officials to focus singularly on economic regional integration via the creation of supra-industrial wealth, the deregulation of the investor sector and the liberalization of investment regimes which are more favorable to the foreign investors in the region and to the individual Asean countries. This integration formula is not different from the one-sided "free" liberalization model prescribed by the IMF-World Bank group and by the neo-liberal economists in the World Trade Organization.

We, as the trade union and civil society movement, therefore, call on the Asean leaders to address the issues declared by them but social challenges of regional cooperation. We ask them to consider the proposal for an Asean Social Charter incorporating the basic ILO core labor standards, namely, freedom of association and collective bargaining, nondiscrimination in work, prohibition of forced labor and elimination of child labor.

Further, like the existing Asean Business Advisory Council, an Asean Trade Union Advisory Council and an Asean Civil Society Advisory Council should be empowered in order to institutionalize social dialogue and consultation with the region's basic sectors. An Asean commission on the welfare of the working people are set in the course of the regional integration project.

(Ng is the regional secretary of the Union Network International and a member of the Solidarity for Asean People's Advocacy.)

Single market and production base

THE ASEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY shall be the end goal of economic integration as envisaged in the Bali Concord II of the Asean Vision 2020. Its goal is to create a stable, prosperous and highly competitive economic region in which there is the free flow of goods, services, investment and capital. It will also facilitate equitable economic development and reduced poverty and socioeconomic disparities in year 2020.

The Asean Economic Community shall contribute to the progressive development and prosperity of the Asean region, narrowing the development gaps among member countries in accordance with the Initiative for Asean Integration and making it a more dynamic and stronger segment of the global supply nodes. Asean's strategy shall consist of the integration of Asean and enhancing its economic competitiveness.

In moving toward the Asean Economic Community, Asean has agreed on the following:

- Liberalize trade and business and economic strategies for implementing of to existing economic initiatives including the Asean Free Trade Area, Asean Framework Agreement on Services and Asean Investment Area.
- Accelerate regional integration in the following priority sectors by 2010: air travel, agro-based products, automotive (manufacturing), e-commerce, electronics, fisheries, health care, rubber-based products, textiles and apparels, tourism, and wood-based products.
- Facilitate movement of business people, skilled labor and talents; and
- Strengthen the institutional mechanisms of Asean, including the improvement of the existing Asean Dispute Settlement Mechanism to effectively implement and legally binding decisions of any economic disputes.

Launched in 1992, the Asean Free Trade Area is one of the key elements to promote the region's competitive advantage as a single production unit. The elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers among member countries is expected to promote greater economic efficiency, productivity and competitiveness.

As of Jan. 1, 2007, tariffs on almost 99 percent of the products on the inclusion list of the Asean-6 (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) have been reduced to no more than 5 percent. More than 60 percent of these products have zero tariffs.

The average tariff for items it has been brought down from more than 12 percent when this started to 2 percent today. So the newer members countries, namely, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam (CLMV), tariffs on about 81 percent of item inclusion list have been brought down to within the 0-5 percent range.

(Source: Department of Trade and Industry)

Building a caring and sharing community

By Jose Concepcion, Jr.

IT WAS THE LITTLE PITS THAT mostly happened 30 years after Asean was organized with a hope to see friendship before. Asean is still faced with the grim fact of poverty. In contrast, I serve as the chair of the Asean Business Advisory Council (ABAC), a body created by the heads of government with each of the 10 heads supporting their members to the advisory council.

After visiting the 10 Asean countries and having very open discussions on what is the problem and what we have to do to move forward, I begged God to inspire me and with His assistance grant me the courage to communicate with our leaders the results of these dialogues and what we have to do to move forward and address the poverty in the region so that all can live in the dignity of a human person.

Our basic break of government gave the members to Asian at the 7th Asean Summit in 1997 to provide private-sector feedback and guidance to accelerate regional integration, and to advance sustainable public and private-sector partnership. The members of that is expanded to realize the Asian Asia Community following the decision in 2002 to set up the Asian Community.

Regional integration is one being pursued under a common vision to achieve a "One Caring and Sharing Community" together with 1 vision, 1 identity and 1 community.

Today, Asean is facing the forces of globalization and a most character integrate with the economies of Japan, China and Korea. It was therefore required to the following questions raised by the Japan Prime Minister of Cambodia, Hun Sen, Hong, in his address during the first Asian Summit in Hun Sen on Nov. 22.

1. What are the prospects of such community for the people of East Asia?

2. Do we have a strong commitment to achieve an inspirational goal of building a community?

3. How do we convene this development gap between the members of East Asia with different level of development?

4. How do we provide a sense of belonging and regional identity?

The combined GDP of East Asia is more than $14 trillion compared with the United States' $11.4 trillion and the European Union's $12.16 trillion.

With the commitment to narrow the gap between the members of East Asian Community, a strong economy is necessary to ensure a step by step process to realize the objective of full integration of the East Asian Community.

Hereby, have started those of the East Asia Business Council, together with China as the immediate past president and with Japan to form an increasing chair, the East Asian Community will have a standing nominee composed of 13 dynamic leaders that will bring this about.

(Concepcion is the chief of the Asean Business Advisory Council and founding chair of the East Asia Business Council.)

Group must address insecurities that working people face

By Rosalinda Pineda Ofreneo and D. L. Duaso

CAN ASEAN BE TRUE TO ITS VISION of "one caring and sharing community" if it is just governments relating to each other across negotiating tables? Obviously, the Asean people must be involved, especially those who are most at the working people.

Most of the employed in Asean are working in the informal economy (at least 20 million or 60 percent of total employed in the Philippines). Women are largely found in home-based workers, vendors, mail orders, waste recyclers, small (sidelines) dressers, construction workers, and others. Many are women who, aside from having to work to raise a pittance to sustain survival, also shoulder the burden of household, child care and community service.

The informal economy has been growing due to the continued effects of liberalization, deregulation and privatization, which have driven out millions of workers from the formal economy (34 million, according to the International Labor Organization (ILO), in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis). At the same time, the informal economy serves as the business wing of the production holding, which enables firms to maintain a small core of regular workers and have recourse to large pool of cheap casual labor.

In the Asean, therefore, many are seriously affected by various forms of insecurity. Economic insecurity is a common threat to workers who have no job security, no labor and social protection. Formal workers under flexibilization and contractualization are vulnerable to job loss and income insecurity. Informal workers can be easily terminated and deported. Home-based and other informal production forces that job holders can suddenly disappear with no other alternative in sight, as their meager wage can easily be wiped out by a sudden decline in clients.

So for truly is facing and sharing community, we need to build workers' rights to security (so the working people experience on a daily basis it must unite) beyond the economic sphere and into the political sphere. Workers' security which is based on freedom from fear and want, whereby workers can exercise their rights, and citizens are empowered to develop their potential and participate in decision-making.

The Asean's stated concern for social protection is a positive step but efforts must be concrete and not just lip service. Such as Thailand's initiative to have a universal health care system. Likewise, an integrated approach to social protection is a must in order to meet the economic and other human security requirements of the working people—e.g., accessible jobs, living and livelihood, access to affordable health care, education and housing, safe community and family environment, guarantees on civil and political rights, including personal protection related to domestic violence. Without an integrated approach, social protection policies, narrowly defined, simply remain used by informal workers who are not covered by any social protection in countries to their own social security.

In this context, we support the campaign for decent work based on the ILO Decent Work Agenda, providing the basic rights of workers, employment and income opportunities, social protection, social dialogue at work, and the elimination of forced and child labor. We also urge the immediate ratification by the Asean member countries of the ILO Convention on Home Work (No. 177). In the Asean, there are millions of homeworkers (at least six million in the Philippines), most of whom are women who are multi-functional and subjected to gender-based discrimination.

The human security debate in the Asean have also embedded informal workers to be more active in the campaign for fair trade practices. The wide network that the Asean Trade Union Confederation (ATUC) has established with other labor organizations will be an avenue for local producers to have a right-based share of the domestic market, e.g., rice, sugar, for a establishment of small and a stop to smuggling and dumping of cheap foreign products.

We fully endorse enhancing domestic accumulation capabilities through the use of locally available resources, production catering to basic consumption needs, and investment in social infrastructure in the Asean. Such a development strategy will be a key to the creation of decent jobs and the reduction of poverty.

(Ofreneo is the regional coordinator of Asian Network for Women in Public Service. Duaso is a research consultant of KSS and of Fair Trade Alliance.)

Across the NATION

500 soldiers secure retrieval areas in Albay

TYPHOON survivors in Catanauan, Quezon, troop to the municipal hall for relief goods.

CAMP ELIAS ANGELES, PILI, CAMARINES SUR—Some 500 soldiers of the Philippine Army, Air Force and Navy are continuously securing the areas affected by mudslide in Albay to protect the workers doing retrieval operation, according to Brig. Gen. Arnulfo Tiamzon, assistant commander of the 9th Infantry Division.

Tiamzon yesterday said Army soldiers were tasked to penetrate areas still not reached by rescue and retrieval operation workers by walking on foot over damaged roads.

Army soldiers are doing mobile roadblocks such as preventing security, medical action, relief operation to being part of the retrieval operations forces, added Tiamzon.

On Friday, Army doctors and medical professionals conducted a medical mission in three villages of Sto. Domingo, Albay, while Army engineers cleared roads in Padang, Legazpi City and Camalig, Albay, he reported.

Yesterday 309 dogs were flown in from Camp Aguinaldo in Manila to help in the retrieval operations in areas where mudslides induced by volcanic debris from the slopes of Mayon volcano, were believed to have buried hundreds of bodies.

Tiamzon said the 309 dogs were expected to help soldiers locate those trapped under the volcanic debris.

He said, however, that the chances of finding survivors are very dim as the days dragged on and explained that a person could only survive three days in the mud underneath the rubbles.

Tiamzon said Task Force Tiwasay will continue with its retrieval operations even as relief and rehabilitation operations were on-going.

In a mobile phone interview, Col. Roberto Morales, Task Force Tiwasay's commanding officer, said they have retrieved 50 more bodies in Padang, Legazpi City yesterday morning and that they will preserve one hour to the nearby town of Sto. Domingo.

Morales said they have asked for time to ward off the stench of decomposing bodies as the soldiers carry the dead bodies individually so retrieving teams for delivery to funeral homes to segregate.

Southern Luzon Command Chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano said the disaster and relief units in the areas he hard by Typhoon "Reming" will continue with their task until the evacuation normalized.

Yano said that in times of disaster these units, which are "built-in" in every Army command, are automatically activated. Joann Garcia-Ilar Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Transco steps up power restoration in Bicol

NAGA CITY—FIFTY-FIVE PERCENT of power removed in Camarines Norte, the province hit hardest by supertyphoon "Reming" and "Milenyo," the National Transmission Corp. (Transco) is rushing up the installation of emergency towers and closely coordinating with power cooperatives so there would be light in Bicol on Christmas.

Except for Camarines Norte and Naga City, the entire Bicol peninsula, where the two supertyphoons knocked down power lines and destroyed transmission facilities, was still plunged in darkness last week.

Guillermo Rebildado, vice president for south Luzon and chief of Transco's Task Force Reming, however, assured the power evacuees to is matched Bicol (but the town and city centers in Albay, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon would be reconnected on Christmas Day.

In a meeting on Wednesday, Rebildado told representatives of seven power cooperatives (but more than 400 linemen), who were mobilized from Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, have been divided into 22 groups and were working round-the-clock to beat the Christmas Day target.

He said Transco devised temporary short poles that bypassed power supply from the Lacsor grid (through the Daraga substation, going to Labo, Camarines Norte in Naga City, while the power generation facilities in Tiwi and Bacman were still down.

Showing the power co-op's representative schedule, he said the Tiaong, Quezon connection from the Lacsor grid would also connect Daraga, Albay, going to Sorsogon.

The power line system, comprising 12 power line segments that run through Albay, Camarines Sur and Sorsogon, was cut when 116 steel towers and 867 wooden poles were ripped off from the ground when supertyphoon Reming hit Bicol on Nov. 30.

In consultation with the management of seven power co-ops in Bicol that included the Camarines Sur Electric Cooperative (Camsurco) ONE and IV, Albay Electric Cooperative (Aleco), and Sorsogon Electric Cooperative District I and II, Rebildado set the earliest possible reconnections in three provinces.

Rebildado clarified that the reconnection of the power supply from the Transco transformer (only the so-called backbone lines as follows: Naga-Naga (Camarines II) on Dec. 7; Iriga-Polangui-Ligao (Aleco), Naga-Pili (Camarines II) and Pili-Iriga (Camarines III) on Dec. 8; Daraga-Sorsogon (Sorsogon I and II) and Daraga-Legazpi (Aleco) on Dec. 16.

The managers and Transco also agreed that the Naga-Libmanan (Camarines I) and Pili-Tiplon (Camarines IV) will be reconnected on Dec. 18.

On Dec. 23, the Transco targets to connect the power lines Tiwi-Wallian (Aleco), Naga-Calabanga (Camarines II) and Iriti-Iriga (Camarines IV) while on Dec. 24, the power line Naga-Tinambac would also receive its power reconnection.

Rebildado said the restoration of power down to the households would depend on the power co-ops providing services in particular areas of the three provinces.

"It would depend on the degree and extent of destruction on the power lines and sub-station facilities. The least the damage, the earlier it is possible to reconnect power supply," he explained.

During a meeting on Wednesday, the managers of the power co-ops identified the areas where the power supply could only be restored after Christmas.

In Albay, the hardest hit provinces, restoration of power supply in the towns of Sto. Domingo, Guinobatan, Camalig, Manito, Bacacay and Pio Duran are expected after Christmas to the first months of 2007.

In Camarines Sur, the towns of Pamplona, Pasacao, Cabusao, Libmanan (home center), San Fernando, Canaman and Gainhawan, to are expected to be reconnected after Christmas. Joan Escandor Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Int'l aid agency delivers water to typhoon victims

THE INTERNATIONAL HUMANitarian agency Oxfam, has started its response to the devastation caused by Typhoon "Reming" with the trucks carrying a total of 100,000 liters of drinking water reaching its way to the affected areas on Friday.

"In the event of an emergency such as the one caused by the two supertyphoons in Bicol, people are often cut off from clean water services and food. Providing these services as quickly as possible helps prevent sickness such as diarrhea," Josephine Hatton, Oxfam Typhoon Response Manager, said in a press release sent to the Inquirer.

Oxfam will also get nine emergency repairs of water and sanitation infrastructure. Suppose prevention and supplies such as jerry cans, soap, washing detergent and sanitary napkins, and blankets to the most vulnerable communities.

"We have already received information of diarrhea outbreaks so we have to act quickly to prevent further strain to the communities. Oxfam will initially respond to the worst hit provinces of Albay and will expand its programs to other areas not getting the necessary assistance," Hatton said.

Oxfam will also engage in emergency food and livelihood seeds. It has earmarked a total relief budget of approximately $1.4 million for the next six months of humanitarian response in Bicol.

"We launch an emergency response whenever floods, health, and livelihoods are threatened by natural disaster. In any emergency, our primary goal is to reduce the incidence of death and disease," said Hatton.

Oxfam has distributed over 570 people dead, 746 missing, and at least 80,000 houses to have been completely destroyed because of Typhoon Reming. On a conservative estimate, the last three supertyphoons have affected some 1.7 million people of which an estimated 91,000 people are living in 273 evacuation centers.

INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Assoc. Ed./Mgr. Alconaba

Group serves free meals for park dwellers

FMB MEMBERS distribute food to park dwellers. (PHOTO BY MB)

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Davao City

TEN-YEAR-OLD MIKAY PAMILAG IS PLAYING with her friends at the Rizal Park here on a Saturday afternoon but her almond-shaped eyes would catch the crowd from time to time.

Mikay comes to the park with her mother, who sells cigarettes.

Mikay is obviously anticipating the arrival of a group of young men and women, who in their simple use of attention, provide some degree of happiness to the children.

Mikay and the other children do not wait too long.

As soon as they see them, the children and even some elderly who are spending time in the park, break into a chant like (Sorry Magkuon ah) kon ko... pagkaon ah) konko... (Food not bombs... food not bombs)."

Mikay has lost count of the times that she got to receive free food from Food Not Bombs (FNB), a community of activists fighting for equal distribution of food as a basic right of every individual.

Always a crowd drawer, the FNB, serves free all-vegan food, which they consider healthy and more plant as compared to meat and fish-based food.

"I am really thankful because they are giving us food. It's just rice and vegetables but it eases my hunger," Mikay said.

In June 2002, FNB started to distribute free meals among the dwellers of Rizal Park.

Tattered pants

FNB members can be identified from a row of strangers with their tattered pants, black shirts, chains, piercings, and elaborate tattoos.

To people who see them for the first time, the group could be mistaken for rebellious youths.

With members mostly from the punk community in Davao City, FNB goes around the Bangkerohan Public Market to collect rice, vegetables and fruits from market vendors, items that are oftentimes leftovers and thrown to the waste bins.

They then cook what they have collected and feed them to the Rizal Park dwellers.

"Feeding the hungry can be done without us spending money, just time and the dedication to lessen the problem of hunger, especially among the youth. We have been doing this through the help of countless individuals, market vendors, who willingly shared us what they have," Benjamin Gabotit said, an FNB member, said.

Movement

Started as an antiwar movement, FNB was founded at the Cambridge University in Manchester in 1989.

The movement, which has been working extensively to end poverty and hunger, opposes the globalization of the economy and the destruction of the environment, among others. It is reportedly one of the fast-growing movements all over the world as it is attractive among punk communities and activists.

FNBers are operating following cities in Asia, the United States, Canada, Australia, Middle East, Africa and the Latin American countries.

In its website (www.foodnotbombs.net), the global movement boasts of hundreds of autonomous chapters sharing food to the homeless and promoting the environment's simplest allocation of funds for arms and other programs instead of putting huge budget for food.

Gabotit said observing a horizontally structured organization, FNB does not have formal leaders. Every member, he said is involved in decision-making.

Surplus

Gabotit and the other members painstakingly collect and collect surplus food and generate them before each meals for people who seldom have food.

But despite their work, FNB members have been subjected to harassment by the authorities.

In San Francisco, California for example, at least a thousand arrests have been made on FNB members.

Members of the movement in the US have also been reported by past under investigation by the National Bureau of Investigation and other intelligence agencies.

In this city, Gabotit said their members also experience similar harassment.

At least two of their members, who have since been known as members of the Punk 11, were arrested and tortured in Sagada. Until now, a number of them still are languishing in their detention cells.

Working closely with groups such as Kinahiyahan Chaden (Earth First!), FNB is often seen in environmental demonstrations as they press their advocacy in challenging environmental pronouncements.

"We encourage others to look into the issue of poverty and hunger as a problem so simple that can be explained and solved with not much technicality and policies," Dindo, another FNB member here, said.

PIXMA
Canon
Delighting You Always

Get instant treats at McDonald's and the chance to win a trip for two to Singapore with PIXMA Printers and Canon Genuine Inks and Papers.

PIXMA brings you unlimited printing possibilities, now Canon brings you the chance to win big. Every purchase of specially marked PIXMA Printers gets you a Cheeseburger Meal at selected McDonald's stores in an instant. You also get a Bonbon or Hamburger for every specially marked Canon Genuine Ink or Paper. All this, while getting a chance to win a trip for two to Singapore for the Grand Prize!

Start building your family's future today!
The convenient and worry-free terms of Robinsons Bank Home Loan will show you how.

RATES
9.08% Fixed for 1 Year
9.88% Fixed for 3 Years
9.98% Fixed for 5 Years

RobinsonsBank
A Savings Bank

Davao solons debate proper singing of national anthem

By Geronimo S. Lacoste
Davao City

THE WAY THE NATIONAL anthem was sung at the opening of Manny Pacquiao's final fight against Mexican boxing champion Eric Morales has moneterily created a brouhaha at the Davao City Council.

Two days after Pacquiao's win at the Thomas and Mack's Center in Las Vegas, city councilors, who were previously jumping with joy over his victory, raised a howl over the way Emily Geronimo sang the national anthem during the opening of the fight.

To the consternation, and perhaps, chagrin of many people attending the popular council session, the councilors spent about an hour discussing the right tempo of the song and whether or not Geronimo or any other artists should be allowed to tamper with it.

"That song is supposed to be vibrant, full of life," said an indignant SPO4 Abellera, who even filed a resolution reminding the people of Davao of the national song's official version.

"But the way that she sang it was very slow," he complained.

One councilor sang a bellary while another broke into laughter as the usual, scary eyed Abellera discussed what he called the humanization of the national song.

"The singer, obviously unaware of the law, sang it in a subdued, dramatic and handmaiden-like interpretation," he said in the proposed resolution, co-authored by Isendel Ilem.

He described the original versions as a marching song, with a highly partisan beat.

Other councilors argued that Geronimo's rendition was only to set the mood for the game, which somehow matched Pacquiao's prayerful mood before the fight.

But Abellera cited Republic Act No. 8491, also known as the Flag and Heraldic Code.

He said the law was passed to, in essence, stop the trend among artists in the mid-90s to experiment with various tempos and renditions of the national anthem.

Abellera said he felt "weak for a while" when he listened to Geronimo's rendition of the national anthem but eventually recovered to be watched Pacquiao fight.

"Anybody who represents the Philippines in such a large crowd, and to an audience that is beyond that worldwide should be faithful to the original and official rendition of the song," he later told the reporters.

He said he was concerned that some people, especially schoolchildren, might follow Geronimo's example.

KALINDOGAN 2006

INDIGENOUS YOUTH PEACE CONGRESS

* Ata Manobo * Arumanen/Manobo * Ata/Tigwahanon * Banwaon * Bukidnon * B'laan * Bilaan *
* Dibabawon * Higaonon/Pulangiyon * Higaonon * Ilianon * Ilonggo * I'longgon * Kalagan *
* Manobo B'laan * Mandaya * Manobo Arumanen * Mansaka * Manobo * Matigsalog *
* Manobo-Dulangan * Mamanwa * Manobo Kalamansig * Manobo Pulangiyon * Obo-Clata *
* Pulangiyon * Subanen * Sama * Tagakaolo * Tiboliun * Tagbanua * Tiruray * T'boli *
* Teduray * Tala-andig * Umiliamnon * Umalahanon * Yakan *

From October 19 to 23, more than 300 young individuals from 38 Indigenous Peoples (IPs) tribes in the Philippines gathered together for a five-day youth congress called Kalindogan 2006. The event allowed them to explore their unique role in responding to the realities that challenge the basic rights of the IPs in the country. It was also an occasion for them to discover how they as young people can contribute to the IP's efforts towards self-determination.

What follows is the declaration that the participants formulated as their way of expressing their common desire for the realization of peace, justice, and development among the IPs.

We, the delegates to the Kalindogan 2006, a gathering of young Indigenous Peoples (IPs) from 38 tribes in Mindanao and other provinces in the Philippines, held at the PAMULAAN Center for Indigenous Peoples Education, in our commitment and desire to help in the development of our communities, wish to make the following declaration:

The Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao continue to experience prejudice and injustice, human rights abuses, and exploitation that hinder the development of ourselves and our communities. Furthermore, the IPs continue to be victimized by the wanton destruction of our country's natural resources, the prejudicial laws of the Philippine government, and the recurring conflicts caused by the misunderstanding among various groups.

We, the young Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao, challenge our tribal communities as well as our leaders to:

- establish a unified voice that will represent our common tribe;
- respect and promote our culture;
- face the call of protecting our ancestral lands even at the cost of one's life;
- provide avenues for the youth to participate in tribal discussions and in the work of developing our communities; and
- encourage with greater fervor other IPs to return to traditional ways of farming as their primary means of livelihood and to strive to revitalize the richness of the land.

We also challenge the government to:

- observe the right process in applying the Free and Prior Informed Consent(FPIC) as just means in making decisions;
- issue a moratorium on the releasing of applications for the operations of mining and mono-cropping plantations while discussions are ongoing as to how these will affect Ancestral Lands;
- establish, uphold, and propagate an educational system that is adapted to the needs and context of our own culture;
- align all related and conflicting laws such that they support and complement the provisions of RA 8371 (IPRA Law); and
- establish a Department of Indigenous Peoples.

We likewise challenge our fellow young IPs to:

- participate in issues that affect our tribe; and
- stand up for our rights, culture and the aspirations of our communities.

We the delegates are committed to:

- establish core groups in our communities that will work to encourage greater involvement from other young IPs; and
- lead efforts that promote order in our tribe.

We will endeavor to become a united voice that will represent our communities in various branches of government, as well as in national and local movements.

-- Signed by the Youth of the Indigenous Peoples --

October 23, 2006
PAMULAAN Center for Indigenous Peoples Education
University of Southern Philippines, Davao City

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS:
Ayeni Development Foundation * APC * Bakay Mindanao * Balabian Tribal Filipino Foundation * Cathaheet Foundation * Diocese of Butuan, Cotabato & Surigao * ECMI-Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines * Episcopal CIP * Fr. Vincent Cullen * Fulugan Learning & Development Center * ILANAN * Mindanawon * Mindanao Tripartite Youth Core * National Commission for Indigenous Peoples * Pagbalangan IKKULTA * Pinyatan-Farm * SSPS * Tulong Kalutoho * USDP-Mintal

Dumaguete could lose funds for port terminal

DUMAGUETE CITY—THE CITY government here is in danger of losing the P100 million funding for its passenger port terminal due to government red tape that has been delaying its implementation.

The project, already stalled for about four years, was supposed to be implemented this year but hit another snag because the Philippine Ports Authority could not fulfill a set date in design problems.

Mayor Agatón Remben said if the project bidding does not push through this month, the more than P100-million funding for the facility would return back to the national coffers.

Under the law, funding for a project that did not push through will be returned to the national government at the end of the year, Remben explained.

The effort to put up a modern port facility in Dumaguete began in the late 1990s but it was strongly opposed by Silliman University, one of the country's oldest and the city's premier educational institution, because the original design would adversely affect the highly diverse marine environment of the city's waters.

City Administrator Dominador Damulag said significant revisions were done on the project's design and the city government began to vigorously push for its implementation in 2002 after it finally got the nod of Silliman.

In 2004, President Macapagal-Arroyo led the groundbreaking ceremony for the project but the PPA later informed city officials that it could not push through because the proposed site was still being litigated.

The plan was again modified with the help of the city's United Architects of the Philippines (UAP) chapter that volunteered its services for free.

Damulag said the design has been revised four times and this has been "very frustrating" especially to the city government and to architects Bobby Evasco and Jim Abion who led the drafting of the architectural design of the terminal.

Damulag said the PPA-Negros region has been trying to push the project off the ground but the design still have to be revised one more time to bring down the cost to below P100 million.

Damulag said that under PPA rules, projects amounting to P100 million and above would have to be deliberated and approved by the PPA board, which would further delay its implementation.

Damulag said Dumaguete Port Manager Nonito Calderon was doing his best to speed up the process and this was keeping alive the city official's hope that the bidding for the port terminal could still be accomplished before the Sinulog Festival in January. —Jhaypee Hospicio

Surigao road bid probed

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL Sur—The Ombudsman is investigating the alleged irregularity in the bidding of the Silikon-pasu road connecting project in Esperanza del Sur, a coastal public works official said.

The investigation has also prompted the Department of Public Works and Highways to suspend the project, which is seen as important to boost the economic development of the province.

Rei Ramon Mojeno, public works director for Caraga, clarified that the questionable bidding process was done at the DPWH central office in Manila and not at the regional office in Surigao City.

The project, which costs P1.17 billion, involves the improvement of the 73-km Marihatag-Barobo and Tagbina-Hinatuan-Bislig section of the Surigao-Davao Coastal Road.

The Surigao-Davao Coastal Road Project is a World Bank-assisted project funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Manipulation

Information reaching the Ombudsman shows that local and foreign companies have manipulated the bidding process.

Despite the suspension, Mojeno said they were optimistic that the project would still be implemented next year.

Once it starts, it could be completed by 2018, he said.

The project has been anticipated by residents of Surigao del Sur, which has been suffering from the province's bad road conditions.

The national highway in Surigao del Sur is the only road access in Caraga that has not been converted.

The Bayugan City-to-San Francisco, Agusan del Sur stretch of the highway was already finished while the San Francisco-Bislig section was expected to be completed by November next year. —Glen U. Rungeduan, Inquirer Mindanao

CAINDUIDL

Big brother has to hold still his little sister, who is anxious to get a ride on a carousel, set up by the Davao City government free of charge to the public as a way of giving joy to the poor.

Batangas pigs declared free from foot and mouth disease

BATANGAS CITY—AFTER 12 years, Batangas hogs have been declared free of foot and mouth disease (FMD), said a report made by the Bureau of Animal Industry (BAI) cleared. National Meat and Wealth Director Turk Stee during an agricultural summit here on Wednesday.

The province, which supplies 50 to 60 percent of Metro Manila's pork, counted 139 FMD cases in a reported outbreak from 1999-2000, then affected 23 towns and the cities of Batangas, Lipa and Tanauan.

The BAI declaration came after the agency found out that no single FMD case has occurred in the province since January last year.

BAI assistant director Dr. Vic Adriana said their move is a way of "removing the trade barrier or economic disease in the country's hog raisers."

At the height of the outbreak, provincial veterinarian Dr. Rodrigo Bautista said Batangas hog traders were unable to export their pigs to Northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

"Being FMD free is such a great blessing. There would be no more restrictions in animal transport, living or dead," Bautista added.

FMD is a highly contagious and sometimes fatal viral infection among cattle and pigs. Infection is usually transmitted through direct contact with infected animals or with contaminated pens or vehicles used to transport livestock.

The disease is characterized by high fever that declines rapidly after two or three days, blisters inside the mouth that lead to excessive secretion of ropey or foamy saliva, and blisters on the feet that may rupture and cause lameness.

The disease is widespread throughout the world except parts of South and Central America, United States, Australia, Canada and rest of Europe.

Bautista said the number of hog raisers in the country has gone up over the years, which made it difficult for the provincial veterinary office to monitor and put movement within its area of responsibility.

Slaughter houses were not strict in terms of accepting pigs from traders which may have come in the FMD-spread to Batangas hog farms, he said.

To prevent the disease spread, the DVO enforced biosecurity measures, which include a closure order and quarantine of infected farms, tracing of infected farm stocks, stopping vaccination of hogs located three kilometers away from affected farms and establishment animal checkpoints on highway roads.

FMD cases reportedly were down from 12 in this year's area, said the Batangas Task force foot and Mouth Disease.

Adia Valentino, president of the Batangas Animal Traders and Handlers Association, hailed BAI's move, saying the disease alone caused a decrease in pork prices at P55 per kilo, which resulted in massive loss of revenues among hog raisers and traders alike.

He also expects their market share to increase once buyers from other Metro Manila regions would no longer be hesitant to buy pork from Batangas.

By Dec. 28, Antolin said the BAI expects to declare Batangas as FMD protected area along with Laguna, Nueva Ecija and Isabela and Cagayan Region. —Alvin Elchico

Batangas said it took 20 years before the disease, which was controlled in 1979, resurged in the Philippines in 1995. Marlene Alexander Lanares, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Typhoon-struck businesses to get loan reprieve

LEGAZPI CITY—THE NATIONAL government would extend help to businesses, which suffered damages and losses in the wake of Supertyphoon "Nando," through a loan restore program by the Bombo General.

This was announced by Bicol Governor Araneta Tesorgao has agreed to recommend to the Monetary Board (the central banks, including commercial and rural banks, to grant a "rollover" window to all Bicol-based businesses hit by the recent typhoon."

The recommendation was made on Monday, a day before Albay Municipal Airways (Albay) Committee Visit and Albay area provinces which suffered the most in terms of casualties and damage to property, he said.

Salceda said this is an "good response" by the Monetary Board."

Salceda, who also chairs the House committee on budget and appropriations, added that under the 5-year refinancing program, the General Bank will assume loans at a 0.5 percent discount rate, or based on the prevailing 91-day Treasury bill rate.

Businesses have suffered heavy losses as heavy drops and no establishments, warehouses and factories were flooded and many businessmen have to contend with damaged or useless inventory.

The biggest mall in the region, the Gaisano-owned Bubby Mall here, only opened yesterday, after the typhoon blew off parts of its roof.

Glenny Commercial Center, the oldest department store chain and mall, with branches in Legazpi and Tabaco City, was also heavily flooded, but in less than a week after flooding, it reopened for business.

Also seriously affected were rice mills, coconut plantations, copra mills and other agri-based businesses which were flooded, struck by heavy winds and covered by mudflow from Mayon volcano.

The loan reprieve for businesses follow the announcement on Tuesday by the President of a 6-month installment deferral package or "moratorium on arrears penalties" for those members here of the Social Security System, Big Boy and the Government Service Insurance System.

At least 100,000 houses were totally damaged in the Bicol region while 140,000 were partially damaged.

He said that all these measures are efforts by the national government to "normalize the economy in Bicol as soon as possible." —Delma C. Reyes, Inquirer South-ern Luzon

JOAN Jason cleans dirty mud components he retrieved from his house buried in mud after Typhoon "Nando" hit Guinobatan, Albay.

Ex-columnist of Ecija paper shot dead

By Arnaldo Rayos
Inquirer Central Luzon

CABANATUAN CITY—A FORMER newspaper columnist here was shot and killed by two men while he was visiting his farm in Barangay Sta. Arcadio on Thursday.

Police said Pedro Pantoja Grande, 53, died instantly from five bullet wounds.

Grande, a former director of the Nueva Ecija Press Club, used to write a column for the local weekliest "The Recorder" and "Nueva Ecija Times."

His colleagues said Grande stopped writing columns in 2002 and had since been managing the family's farm.

Reports said Grande's wife, Imie Dong Grande, was several meters away from him when the suspects attacked.

Liong Grande, who hosts a variety show in a local radio station, told police that the suspects appeared to be in their teens.

She said she left her husband in front of their property along a road in Sitio Bonanceo as she would visit some neighbors there. A few minutes later, she heard gunshots and discovered that her husband was slain.

Wife

She told the reports, who were armed with a .45 cal. pistol, chased her but they did not harm her.

The National Unions of Journalists of the Philippines said in an alert sent to its members that Grande was the 13th journalist killed this year.

Since 1986, 87 journalists have been killed in the Philippines and most of the cases remained unsolved to date.

Forty-one of the killings took place during the Arroyo administration.

The Belgium-based International Federation of Journalists said the Philippines is the second most dangerous place in the world for journalists.

Aside from the killings, 58 Filipino journalists face harassment and libel cases.

ROUNDUP

3 killed in Batangas mishap

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Three people were killed, including two orphaned children, while two others were seriously hurt when a car driven by a drunken man rammed a group of pedestrians in Tanauan City on Thursday night, Batangas police director Senior Supt. Edmund Zaide identified the fatalities as Marie Bella, 15, and her brother Jonathan Rodolfo Fabro, 10. Injured were Linda Bida, 46, and driver Frederick Laguna, 40. Zaide said the victims were walking beside a road in Barangay Bilog-bilog on their way home at around 9 p.m. when they were hit by the Honda Civic (NPR 321) driven by Laguna. Witnesses said Laguna was drunk at the time of the incident. Initially treated at the CP Reyes General Hospital, Zaide said their initial investigation showed that Laguna had just come from a gathering of relatives and was too drunk to drive. He said Bida and Laguna remained in critical condition at the said hospital.

—Marie Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

500 DENR employees to lose jobs

DAVAO CITY—More than 500 personnel of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Southern Mindanao will be affected by the government's streamlining program, a ranking official said. Engr. Nancy Ang, regional executive director of the RDMP (Protected Area and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), that 500 employees have signified their intention to avail of benefits under the program. "The mandate came from the executive department that calls for the streamlining of all agencies because there has a very heavy structure. The government has big outlay for personnel services," he said. Ang said among those affected by the rationalization program are the regional executive director, assistant regional executive director, regional technical directors in the region would be retained.

—Romeo P. Arao, Inquirer Mindanao

OFW loses P3M to robbers

DAVAO CITY—An overseas Filipino worker lost some P2.1 million in cash and valuables after robbers ransacked her house in their town on Friday. Rosa Cambia, 50, and her maid, Milagros Libet, 41, were watching television in her house in Barangay Bangkerohan when five armed men barged in, police said. Cambia, who works abroad as a nurse, said she and her husband spent some P1.1 million to build the house and had saved P1 million. Their cousins were also robbed with a pawnshop tour. Cambia said she had P800,000, $10,000, proceeds from sale of property worth P1 million, seven wristwatches worth P165,000, two digital cameras worth P15,000 and three cellular phones worth P30,000.

—Gabriel Cardenas, Inquirer Northern Luzon

12 facts about Charter Reform that *you* need to know

1 The 1987 Constitution authorizes three-fourths of all the Members of Congress either to amend or to revise it.

Section 1, Article 17 provides clearly that amendments to, or revision of, the Constitution may be "proposed by the Congress upon a vote of three-fourths of all its Members."

The provision does not say "three-fourths of the Senate." Nor does it say "three-fourths of the House of Representatives." It says specifically "three-fourths of all the Members of Congress." And since there are 23 Senators and 232 Congressmen, three-fourths of Congress means 195 votes.

This provision is explicit. It leaves no room for confusion or doubt.

2 Even then, Congress only proposes. As always, the Filipino people will have the final say—by expressing their sovereign will through the ballot.

After Congress has done its work, the electorate itself will decide whether or not to accept the amendments their lawmakers propose—in a plebiscite that must be called within 60 days after Congress has approved these amendments.

3 It is not true that the House of Representatives alone will propose amendments to the Constitution.

Resolution No. 197, approved overwhelmingly by the House in a session on December 7,2006, calls on "All Members of Congress to Propose Amendments to, or Revision of, the Constitution pursuant to Sec. 1, Art. XVII of the Constitution and for Other Purposes."

All of the 23 senators and the 232 congressmen have been notified formally of the convening of the Assembly—which will be held at the Plenary Hall of the House of Representatives, Batasan Complex, Quezon City, beginning at 10 o'clock in the morning of 12 December 2006.

4 The Assembly shall meet until it decides on the specific amendments or revisions of the Constitution that have been proposed for ratification by the people.

The key amendment proposed is a structural shift from the presidential to a unicameral parliamentary system that will simplify government.

The American presidential system—with its elaborate checks and balances, transplanted bodily to our factional-ized political system—has all too often divided government and produced administrative gridlock.

This is why we propose installing in its place a parliamentary government—on the model of successful political systems in Europe, Australia and New Zealand, and in Asia's most prosperous states: Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand.

5 Under our bicameral Legislature, government is like a business corporation having two separate boards of directors. The unavoidable end-result is the corporation's collapse—as conflicting policies and rival ambitions prevent it from growing its stockholders' capital.

In the Philippine State, bicameralism has delayed the passage of vital laws, generated corruption, and made policymaking the product of the least common denominator of agreement among the ruling factions. What is worse, our political climate of weakness and instability has encouraged military adventurism. The result has been a series of coup attempts—the most recent being the abortive coup of February 2006.

6 It's not true that only the Senate would be abolished in the proposed shift to a parliamentary government.

Both the Senate and the House of Representatives—the whole of Congress as it is constituted—would be dissolved. Under the unicameral parliamentary system being proposed, a one-chamber Assembly (Parliament), would be created—producing more efficient, more accountable and much less expensive government.

7 Maintaining a bicameral legislature has been a very expensive luxury that the nation can no longer afford.

Shifting to a unicameral parliamentary system would effectively cut in half the more than P6 billion that make up the two-chamber Congress' yearly operating budget—and free billions of pesos for development.

8 These huge savings would go a long way toward financing our country's battle against mass poverty.

These freed funds could augment development funds for building vital infrastructure such as roads, bridges, school buildings, hospitals, water facilities, irrigation, food production and rural electrification. They could also fund microfinance opportunities for the urban and rural poor.

Heightened public investment will certainly create hundreds of thousands of jobs and livelihood opportunities.

9 Opinion surveys have consistently shown that, increasingly, Filipinos look to Constitutional reform as the nation's last hope of attaining political stability and of raising the economy's competitiveness in global markets.

A clear national consensus for amending the 1987 Constitution has formed. Pulse Asia, for instance, notes that the number of those opposed to Charter change has been declining. Between October 2005 and March 2006, the percentage of those opposed dropped significantly in income class ABC (minus 18%) and in Metro Manila (minus 19%).

10 The amendments being proposed through an act of Congress are also overwhelmingly supported by our country's grassroots leaders.

Governors, City and Municipal Mayors, Vice Mayors, Councilors and Provincial Board Members who lead the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP) count a total 1.7 million members—including local officials and barangay chairmen, councilmen, tanod and barangay health workers. ULAP is the moving spirit of this popular political movement.

The League of Provinces led by Bohol Governor Erico Aumentado, the League of Cities led by Iloilo City Mayor Jerry Trenas and the League of Municipalities led by Binalonan (Pangasinan) Mayor Ramon Guico, have also declared their support.

11 It is not true that the amendments have not been thoroughly discussed, debated, and scrutinized by the Filipino people.

A low-key campaign for Charter change has been waged for more than 15 years by reformists from the political, economic, labor, financial and professional sectors.

The People's Initiative launched by ULAP and Sigaw ng Bayan set off a nationwide debate amplified by radio, television and newspaper reports and commentaries. The debate raised qualitatively ordinary people's awareness about our urgent need to reform the political system.

12 We must send out a message of hope, particularly to our young people.

Over these next 10 years, our country must complete its modernization—or forever remain a backwater of East Asia. Whether our country is to have a new beginning—or stay in the political rut in which it has been trapped this half-century—this crucial question for our country is our hands.

In its largest sense, Charter change is really an effort to modernize our country's politics. This is why it is meeting strenuous opposition from the forces of the status quo—from those who benefit from things as they are.

The struggle is hard, but we cannot slacken. For we must give back to our youths their future. We must restore to them the hope that tomorrow will be better, and that hope is to be found—not among some alien people—but here at home, in the land of their forefathers.

Sunday SPORTS

E-mail sr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendrez

Late Sports
More sports stories on A29 to 32

Billiards may save country

THE SPORT THAT HAS thrived in smoky halls alive with money games and nothing with liquor could very well turn out to be the one that saves a flat-lining Philippine campaign in the 15th Asian Games.

World champion Ronnie Alcano's endeavors in...

"We have a good chance of winning the gold medal," said Alcano, who topped the World Nine Championship recently.

Already a pastime that has been a thorny issue between parents and their teenage children, half the masses of Alcano's optimistic will make people in no-thorny cringe even more. High school dropout Jeff de Luna...

Jeff and Dennis Gabriel can pull off the feat," the 24-year-old Alcano...

Dr Luna and Gabriel are targeting the 9-ball singles gold medal, a prize in the Asian Games that has unceremoniously eluded the Philippines, a long-time hotbed of the sport. The country won gold medals in the 1998 edition in Bangkok through Candy Villa and Nonoy Villanueva.

Django Bustamante and Antonio Gabica won in 2002 in Busan, South Korea. Their self-bet set 8-ball doubles in Doha, Qatar.

Alcano, who paid a courtesy call to Tourism Secretary Joe Durano and assistant secretary Cynthia Carreon Friday, believes the absence of big names—including his—doesn't hurt the Philippine participation one bit.

"The chances are the same even if it were Ilana Reyes or Video we sent because we only have the edge of experience," said Alcano. Marlon Bernardino, coach/trainer

RP finds a silver lining

By Ted S. Melendrez

DOHA, QATAR—TAEKWONDO JIN Mary Ancajas-Rivera carried the Philippines' hopes all the way to the finals of the 67-kilogram class Friday night before bowing to a technically superior South Korean and settling for the silver medal—the best performance yet by a Filipino in the 15th Asian Games here.

The 19-year-old Athens Olympian from Makati chased taller Hwang Kyung-seon all match long but just could not pull off point-scoring kicks and frontal, 1-6.

Rivera's silver was the first for the 107-contingent after eight days of the competition and improved on the bronze-winning performance on Tuesday of teammates Rachelen Nanico Abis in the Strawweight class and lightweight Antonio Domingo.

Lightweight Genebert Bacacho came out with both fists flying to halt Turkmenistan's Zenkar Mashgylych via RSC-1:0s. Jayhwa snaps contest contested 23 second rounds into the third round and never himself of at least a bronze in the boxing competitions.

Proving his 20-13 victory against the 6th world ranker Ali Ersab of Pakistan in the round of 16 was no fluke, the 22-year-old Bacacho swarmed all over Bahrainian in the third round and never let him away until a staggering right hook.

By the time of the stoppage, the Filipino was already 24-4 ahead in the judges' scorecards, winning the first two rounds by scores of 9, 1 and 11, 3.

Bacacho became the fourth RP ring to barge into the medal rounds after lightfly-weight Godfrey Castro, lightweight Violito Payla and bantamweight Jones Tipon. He next faces Chinese's Mu Qing for a shot at the gold medal.

Rivera achieved her feat about the same time our masters Leonardo Arellano and Antonio Gabica reached the medal round of the 8-ball singles Friday night.

The 46-year-old Arellano, playing on an empty stomach, overcame the loss of three-rack-to-rule match-to-cap Thailand's Amnuaporn Chotipong, 9-8, before Gabica burned India's Alok Kumar of India, 9-6.

Arellano clashes with Japan's Satoshi Kawahara for a shot at the gold medal today while the 34-year-old Gabica tangles with the relatively unknown Hsiang Tien-chang of Chinese Taipei.

Alla Catalan raked the most among six recorded in the horizontal of the Solaire as men's individual pursuit qualifying but fell to 14th place over the fourteen-race is. He failed to qualify with his time of 4 minutes and 44.271 seconds.

With a cast of world champions, the archery competition proved too tough for the Filipinos.

Rachelle-rose Gabral lay to 26th spot with 632 points-41 behind provisional leader Park Sung-hyun of South Korea after the 70-meter and 60m event in the women's individual qualification round.

Gabral stood eight rungs higher than the next best Filipino, Katherine Santos (SM), in the 64 archer field.

Jasmin Figueroa was 34th with 581, followed by Karen Grace Yan in 45th place with 510.

Power Emerson Arpal was his dark with Japan's Yosuke Fukuda, Macao's Ho Long-fai and Lebanon's Rudy Tannous in competition for two losses and reached the next round to the men's individual ball.

Sixth seed Gicil Manuel administrated Sri Lanka's Rajeev Rajapakse, 6-3, 6-4, and Siti Taiko overwhelmed Macao's Edgar Sheng Chi-Lei, 6-1, 6-4, as the two Filipinoncina advanced to the round of 16 in men's singles of the tennis compet.

SYRIA'S Haser Al Dhami (right) invades off the head gear of Indian Harpreet Singh. Al Dhami won the bout.

Beermen mangle Tigers in Lucena

By Rhenan R. Castillo

LUCENA CITY—DANNY SIEGLE SCORED 27 of his 29 points in the first half yesterday, keying an early breakaway and a 106-91 demolition of Coca-Cola that bolstered the Beermen's bid for an outright semifinal seat in the fifth 'b' best Philippine Cup.

San Miguel took the first quarter by 13, the half by 20, before crushing the rest of the way at the Quezon Convention Center host for the Beermen's 10th win in 15 games.

Olsey Ravanes called the shots in an acting capacity with coach Chot Reyes failing to make it to the game because of a prior commitment.

And the Beermen responded in their old, dressed way, never giving the Tigers the chance to execute a comeback as four others, led by Siegle's 29 points, chipped in with twin digit scores.

The Tigers dropped to 4-12 but remained in ninth place for the moment, just half-a-game ahead of tenacious Welcoat in their own race to be the final team to make the wild card playoffs.

"I think 22 would be the magic number," Ravanes said in Filipino.

Danny Ildefonso scattered 13 points and pulled down 11 rebounds and Bonel Balingit chipped in with 11 while Dondon Hontiveros scored 10.

John Arigo led the Tigers with 14 points.

Meanwhile, action returns to the Cuneta Astrodome today with five, Lucia seeking to snap a three-game losing streak against the Avengers in the first game at 4:00 p.m.

Talk 'N Text and Air21 clash in the 6:30 p.m. contest, with both looking for victories that would enhance their chances of nailing one right quarterfinals berths.

The Realtors will come into the game still licking the wounds of a 103-101 overtime loss to defending champion Purefoods on Friday which could have been avoided if not for a crucial Dennis Espino miss from the free throw line in the final 36 seconds.

The Scores:

First Game

(at 4:00 p.m.)

SAN MIGUEL (106)—Seigle 29, Escalo 15, Ildefonso 13, Balingit 11, Hontiveros 10, Ildagdag 9, Pinlac 8, Tagale 7, Espinosa 6, Tenorio 5, Cervantes 2, Wilson 2

COCA-COLA (91)—Arigo 14, Pank 12, Suarez 11, Mendoza 11, Yee 8, Antonio 8, Olivares 7, Gamea 6, Subangan 4, Cuevas 3, Zamora 1, Ventura 1

Quarters: 30-20, 60-40, 83-63, 106-91

Badminton dream finale: Super Dan battles Hidayat

DOHA—EVENTS-minus had been Taufik Hidayat, will face his arch rival Lin Dan of China for the Asian Games badminton singles title after both won their semifinals Friday.

The gold medal match on Saturday will be a rerun of Sun...

Last week, Olympic titlist Hidayat launched an personal attack on Lin, the world champ, saying he was arrogant and unfriendly.

A hushfield spectacularly with Lin winning both their clashes at the Games so far.

Hidayat said he was ready for the showdown, and...asked if he thought he could beat the world number one known as Super Dan, Hidayat replied: "Yeah."

"I played well but I'm really lucky. I finished the match in two sets so I've saved some energy and stamina for the next match," he added.

Seventh seed 16 days' rush cure of his place in the final with a gruelling 2-0 win over Malaysia's Lee Chong Wei to bring the many flag-waving Indonesian contingent in their feet.

Hidayat, 25, who has dipped in the rankings after injuring his back, stunned fourth seed Lin Dan brilliance with a mix of overhead smashes and net-caressing drops.

In contrast, Lin conceded just three points in his way to taking the first game against South Korea's Lee Hyun Il. He was consistent about his chances against Hidayat.

"It will be my third final against Hidayat," said Lin. "He is in very good shape here. I will have to prepare myself for a tough match." AFP

LIN

HIDAYAT

QATAR AIRWAYS القطرية
www.qatarairways.com
Weekly (0800) 810-1888 | Cebu (032) 233-1999

2006 ASIAN GAMES MEDAL TALLY

Nation	G	S	B	Total
China	93	52	24	169
Japan	32	28	37	97
South Korea	27	27	36	90
Kazakhstan	13	5	15	33
Taiwan	9	12	13	34
Iran	8	4	6	18
North Korea	7	11	14	32
Thailand	6	7	11	24
Uzbekistan	5	6	11	22
Qatar	5	4	3	12
Malaysia	4	7	11	22
Hong Kong	3	7	11	21
Kuwait	3	4	2	9
Vietnam	2	4	5	11
Singapore	2	3	4	9
Philippines	1	2	4	7
Saudi Arabia	1	2	3	6
Indonesia	1	1	4	6
India	1	1	3	5
Mongolia	1	1	2	4
Turkmenistan	1	1	1	3
Kyrgyzstan	1	0	1	2
Bahrain	0	2	1	3
Oman	0	1	1	2
Fiji	0	0	1	1

WUSHU athletes competing in the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, are shown with Philippine Sports Commission Officer in charge Leon C. Maximosque, who encouraged them on being home more medals from the quadrennial event slated Dec. 6-15.

Park starting to make waves, attract attention

DOHA, QATAR—THE THRILLING 1,500-meter-winning performance of South Korea's Park Tae-hwan in the 15th Asian Games pool has caught the eye of 1,500-meter world record holder Grant Hackett.

Park won the 1,500 in an impressive time of 14 minutes, 55.00 seconds on the last night of the swimming meet.

Australia's Hackett has been undefeated in 1,500 finals since 1997, including the 2000 and 2004 Olympics and the world and Pan Pacific championships.

But Park's youth and versatility is attracting a lot of attention ahead of next year's swimming worlds.

"I always expected him to swim around that level especially after his 200 and 400 and the way he has been improving over the last couple of years," Hackett, who expects Park to feature prominently at the world championships in Melbourne, Australia next March and at the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

"He's always been a swimmer that I've been aware of and I think that's only the beginning for him," added Hackett.

"So Beijing he'll be very, very good. He's a very talented young swimmer and seems to be improving a lot."

National Youth Commission

NYC, UNFPA nurture youth advocates

By Rissel A. Tarlo

The National Youth Commission and the United Nations Population Fund provided venue for the 267 youth leaders from the country to discuss and to craft policy recommendations on the prevailing youth issues affecting their lives during the 8th National Youth Parliament held recently in Bohol.

A biennial undertaking mandated by Republic Act 8044, the National Youth Parliament delegates were chosen by the Commission ensuring that consideration equal and geographical representation among men and women.

The UNFPA paved the way for the wide participation of the youth, especially those coming from the ten disadvantaged provinces identified under their 6th Country Program, including: Ifil, Province, Rizal, Masbate, Bohol, Sorsogon, Samar, Sultan Kudarat, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.

NYC Chairman Richard Alvin M. Nalupta underscored the partnership of the NYC with the UNFPA in addressing youth concerns, and in ensuring that the voices of the youth will be heard in formulating youth development policies.

Dr. Suneeta Mukherjee, UNFPA country representative challenged the youth to dream high for the greatest challenge is life itself. "You are not only the future of the Philippines, but you are also the today of the Philippines. Aha, you must be influencing the policies for the youth," Mukherjee said.

An offshoot of the convention is the creation of the Confederation of Youth Advocates composed of officers elected by the delegates to ensure that advocacy efforts will be organized, thus the selection of regional convenors, and chairperson of the seven committees: Adolescent Reproductive Health, Cyber Youth, Migrant Sector of Students, Youth Networking and Localization, Youth Migration, SK Reforms and Constitutional Reform.

Only a month after the convention, the NYC expects the 31 youth advocates in a responsibility building training this month in August to do an advocacy, organizational management and action planning. The NYC sees the need to harness the commitment of these officers in pushing for their policy recommendations, while building and strengthening the Confederation.

This empowering activity is also in line with the celebration of the Lunggo ng Kabataan, which is being celebrated every second week of December, as provided in the Local Government Code of 1991 (R.A. 7160).

The following agencies both from government and NGOs served as members of the Technical Working Group for the implementation of the 8th

Youth MP Convn: Provincial Awards Ceremony. Bohol Gov. Chairman Richard Alvin Nalupta, Dr. Suneeta Mukherjee, Country Rep. Samoa, Comm. Mike Lapid

NYP Advocates for Youth (AAT), UP Population Institute, Department of Education, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Population Commission, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, Philippine Information Agency, Employers' Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP), The Forum for Family Planning and Development, Inc., Philippine NGO Council on Population, Health and Welfare, Inc., Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development, Inc.

Nalupta pushes for wider youth participation

NYC Chairman Richard Alvin M. Nalupta

A believer of open dialogues, Richard Alvin M. Nalupta, National Youth Commission (NYC) Chairperson and Chief Executive Officer expressed satisfaction over the lush out of youth participation during the 8th National Youth Parliament.

Attended by 237 youth leaders from all over the country, this NYP holds the highest record of NYP participants. Youth organizations across all sectors and across ideological leanings were represented. "This shows the agency's commitment to include as many youth leaders as possible in policy dialogues," Nalupta said.

Discussions during the four-day Parliament resulted in 20 Resolutions for the seven NYP issues: Adolescent Reproductive Health, Cyber Youth, Magna Carta of Students, Youth Networking and Localization, Youth Migration, SK Reforms and Constitutional Reforms.

These Resolutions form part of the advocacy work to be carried out by the NYC and the youth parliamentarians. Considered as policy recommendations, these Resolutions largely influence policy directions concerning the youth sector.

Nalupta emphasized the importance of the NYP when he told the youth parliamentarians, "Let this NYP be a witness to our continuing firm resolve to work hard until the Filipino youth's vision becomes a reality."

Urgent reforms

Inadvertently, the NYP became a prelude to renewed discussions on SK reforms, which are crucial areas of concern before the next SK elections set in 2007.

Nalupta, a former President of the SK National Federation and a two-term Provincial SK President of Ilocos Norte, has been pushing for SK fiscal autonomy. "This is the best way to install financial accountability from SK officials," the youth leader said.

At present, SK's funds come from barangay funds or from local government allocations for the municipal and city levels. While SK officials can use their funds for some of their activities, for the most part, the use of such fund remains restricted.

Nalupta also said that SK membership should be reverted to the 15 to 21 age bracket. Youth from 15 to 17 years old will compose the SK members while those belonging to the 18 to 21 bracket will be qualified as officials. Without prejudice to ages, the NYC head said those at the higher age bracket are more stature to handle responsibilities.

Wider participation

Nalupta wants to see wider youth participation for the coming year. He noted that ten elections are to be held in 2007: the national and local elections, and the SK elections.

He said, "It is part of our mandate to mobilize the youth to participate in these national activities." In fact, one of the projects he wants the NYC to initiate is a calibrated information dissemination among the youth about the ongoing voter's registration for the elections.

6th NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT
LIST OF APPROVED RESOLUTIONS

A. Committee on Adolescent Reproductive Health

Resolution No. 1 (A Resolution Urging the President of the Republic of the Philippines, Local and Provincial Government Officials, Nongovernmental Institution, the Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHEd), to Implement the Adolescent Reproductive Behavioral and Reproductive Health and Rights in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Levels in an Age Appropriate, Culturally and Gender Sensitive, Rights-Based Approach)

Resolution No. 2 (Resolution Urging the Local Government Units in Cooperation with Concerned Agencies to Spearhead the Formulation of Local Adolescent Reproductive Health Ordinances Enabling the Establishment of Adolescent Health and Rights Task Force, Appropriating Funds Thereof, and For Other Purposes)

Resolution No. 3 (A Resolution Urging All Local Government Units (LGUs), Department of Education (DepEd), Commission on Higher Education (CHEd), and Other Concerned Agencies and Organizations to Establish An School and Community-Based Youth Centers and to Allocate Appropriate Funds for the Purpose)

B. Committee on Cyber Youth

Resolution No. 1 (A Resolution Urging the Congress and the Senate Enacting a Law Requiring a National Mandatory Populating and Filtering System)

Resolution No. 2 (Resolution Supporting House Bill 6738 "Peer Open Source Software (POSS) Act of 2006" Authored by Rep. Teodoro A. Casiño)

Resolution No. 3 (Resolution Supporting Peace Tech, Peace Tech Embassy and Encouraging the Utilization of Technology for Peace)

Resolution No. 4 (Resolution Strengthening the Interactivity and Responsiveness of the Website of the National Youth Commission www.youth.nyc.gov)

Resolution No. 5 (Resolution for the Creation of the National Youth Parliament Website)

C. Committee on Localization and Youth Networking

Resolution No. 1 (A Resolution Strongly Endorsing the Creation of Confederations of Youth Organizations at the Level of Government Unit in Line with the Localization of the 2005-2010 Medium-Term Youth Development Plan (MTYDP)

Resolution No. 2 (A Resolution Strongly Supporting the Pending Bill Entitled an Act to Further Strengthen the Youth Development Program by Creating Local Youth Development Councils in Every City and Municipality and Appropriating Funds Thereof)

Resolution No. 3 (A Resolution Requesting All Local Government Units for the Passage of an Ordinance Creating Local Youth Development Council (LYDC) in Line with the Medium-Term Youth Development Plan (MTYDP)

Resolution No. 4 (A Resolution Requesting Local Government Units to Grant Incentives and Other Non-Monetary Benefits to Private Business Entities Supporting Youth Development Programs)

Resolution No. 5 (A Resolution Endorsing the Creation of a Database for Data Access of Information with Regard to All Existing Youth Organizations Within a Locality)

Resolution No. 6 (A Resolution Encouraging an Annual Observance of a National Youth Day of Youth Prayer and Dialogue)

D. Committee on Youth Migration

Resolution No. 1 (A Resolution Urging the Office of the President to Issue an Executive Order to the Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Justice, National Youth Commission, Philippine Information Agency and Other Concerned Agencies to Launch a Sustainable Advocacy Campaign on the Protection of the Rights of Filipino Youth Migrant and Migrant Workers

Resolution No. 2 A Resolution Requesting the Office of the President to Issue an Executive Order Directing the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC), Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), Bureau of Service Program to Act Professional Youth as a Prerequisite for Employment Abroad

E. Committee on the Magna Carta of Students

Resolution No. 1 (A Resolution Strongly Urging the 13th Congress of the Republic of the Philippines to Enact the Proposed NYC Version of the Magna Carta of Students, Adopting the Remaining Parts of 8th National Youth Parliament in the System of Student Representation in the School Governing Board)

Resolution No. 2 (A Resolution Strongly Urging the President to Include and Certify the Urgency of the Passing of the Magna Carta of Students)

Resolution No. 3 (A Resolution Urging Academe Peer Groups, Public, and Educational Technical Schools, Other Youth Groups to Lobby for Adoption and Implementation of Their Local Version of Magna Carta of Students in Their Schools)

F. Committee on SK Reforms

An Act to Strengthen and Reform the Sangguniang Kabataan Amending for the Purpose Certain Provisions of the Mr. Title, Effective Immediately After Its Publication in Local in 1991, and for Other Purposes That seeks to amend some portions of the 1991 Local Government Code to strengthen the SK such as:

15% of Barangay General Fund set aside for SK for local activities

SK Treasurer shall account funds applicable to a bank deposit or at the municipal treasurer

automatic of suspension of annual income every year

privileges of SKs receive honoraria for SK meetings other than the regular program of SKs, other honoraria for SK Federation members, and Committee SK Presidents, barangay treasurer, etc.

duties and functions of SK officials quarterly SK meetings, suspension of program of activities, budgeting activities for SKs, specifying synchronized elections, introducing SKs to inquiry before each barangay, age 15-21 years old only, and qualifications, grounds for disqualification, appropriations, responsibility issues, repealing clause, effectivity

NYC Officials

RICHARD ALVIN M. NALUPTA
Chairman and CEO

MICHAEL FRANCIS A. LOPEZ
Commissioner at Large

PRISCILLA MARIE T. AGANTE
Commissioner at Large

RAUL DOMINIC I. RAMOLA
Commissioner representing Luzon

BERLIE S. OLAN
Commissioner representing Visayas

MOHAMMAD HANNY T. OMAR
Commissioner representing Mindanao

MILTON RAGAN G. MERCADER
Executive Commissioner

RICARDO JOSE T. BELMONTE, Jr.
Executive Director

NYC Celebrates
Linggo ng Kabataan !!!

Paalala sa mga kabataang bagong botante: Kayo ay pinaaalalahanang pumunta sa Local Registry o COMELEC office sa inyong munisipyo o siyudad upang mag-register. Ang deadline ay December 31, 2006.

"Gusto ko marinig
ng friends ko that I'm back."

Posible 'yan with the new

MYGLOBE IMEVRYWHR

Unlimited VOICE MESSAGING and chatting for just P20 a day!

UNLIMITED

For as low as
P20
per day

Introductory price

P 20	1 day
P120	7 days
P500	30 days

For more info
text IM to 2222 for FREE.

IMEVRYWHR initially available on the following Nokia handsets: 3230, 6260, 6600, 6630, 6670, 6680, 6681, 7610, N70 and N90

ang lakas mo sa **Globe**

Aplus METRO
Edna Ester G. Olpoop
Tell us your feedback: [illegible] E-mail: [illegible]

Santa wears a police uniform

'It's fulfilling to help someone. You feel blessed because you are able to give'

By Tarra V Quismundo

SUPT. GILBERT CRUZ, A MAGUINDAO POLICE officer, once traveled the quiet streets off Interzone for a crucial mission.

But the operation did not require guns, handcuffs or severe sternness.

Cruz was carrying bags of toys for children in a poor community on an island that many Metro Manilans probably do not even know about.

Now Makati police chief, the police officer who began the "Santa Cops" program in 1997, has made it his annual Christmas ritual to play Santa to underprivileged children in the metropolis.

Not surprising since Cruz regards the man in red suit as an inspiration.

"Personally, I would say Glenda Dawal on TV giving gifts to children," said Cruz, the brains behind the "Santa Cops" project he started nine years ago at the San Juan Police Station and which he has brought to the country's 5-municipal capital.

But the police officer also draws from personal experience in his desire to bring cheer to kids.

Cheerful giver

"I understand how it was not to have toys. So why not give toys when you have the capacity and the opportunity to make children happy every Christmas?" the 42-year-old devoted Cruz, a survivor of cerebral aneurysm operations (one of them almost wasting his life) told the Inquirer.

The Tondo-bred began his Christmas gift-giving in 1987, three years into his career in the Philippine National Police (PNP). The annual ritual has taken him to shanty areas in Manila, Mandaluyong and Cainta, Rizal.

Cruz said he wanted to spare children from having to fashion out toys from wood and empty cans, just like he did in his youth.

"I would go to toy stores but my (family) could not afford them. I can still remember how I would make replica cut of wood and metal bearings, a slingshot out of a tree branch and rubber, a pull-cart using four tin cans as wheels and a can of sardines as the body," said Cruz, smiling at the recollection.

Tondo resident

He was about 8 then, the police officer recalled, the second of four sons of a cyclist cobbler and a banana vendor in a public market in Tondo.

"You know how it is in Tondo. There are many children and they all come from small by families," said Cruz, laughing heartily at his own joke.

With the help of classmates in the Philippine National Police Academy and taxpayers.

QUINTO, A.D.

Ballet teacher pays it forward by teaching *dance* to Marikina youths

LIKSAKAN'S PRIDE AND JOY: The schools of the Marikina City Ballet Theatre.

By Maricris Irene V. Tanseting

HIS DANCING BROUGHT HIM fame in the world of performing arts.

But Ernesto dancer Heron Ursabia now finds teaching more fulfilling.

In 1999, months after retiring from Ballet Philippines, Ursabia opened his own studio and began training young kids in Marikina City.

"After 12 years of ballet, it is time to give both the blessings and share the art," the 41-year-old artistic director of the Marikina City Ballet Theatre, the first ballet school recognized by the city government, told the Inquirer.

Drawing on his professional experience, Ursabia started what he called one-on-one quality training seven years ago. But last summer, he decided to teach a bigger class for free.

Future stars

"I want to cultivate the children's potential and watch them grow up to be Marikina's future stars," he said, adding that his vision inspired him to give his best.

"Through techniques in classical ballet, my 'talents' receive the same quality training given to my paying students," the performing arts instructor and choreographer said.

His efforts have started to pay off. Some of his first students, who came from as far away as Cavite and Sorsogon in Bicol, have left to perform abroad.

In January he offered his expertise in elementary and high school students at the SSS Elementary School, Marikina Christian Integrated School and Marikina Heights School.

The training is held 3:30-6 p.m., Monday-Thursday and on weekends.

Attitude before technique

Ursabia said he first observed each student's character and worked to develop in them the right attitude. Dance techniques or movements were taught later after his students had mastered the gestures and style of the art.

"I show them the right way of stretching, of extending their legs and eight pointers, including grace, before they undergo technique training and dance lessons," he said.

According to him, he learned this method from his first ballet teacher, Isolde Amadeo of Ballet Philippines, who was not only a mentor but also like a father to him.

Natural dancer

Ursabia said learning ballet came easy to him because of his love for dancing even as a child. "I guess, the talent runs through my veins," he told the Inquirer.

He said as a high school student, his passion for performing led to his participation in several presentations and competitions in and outside the school.

"It was the time when break dance, street dance, disco, rap and 'street' were popular," he recalled.

In 1981, Ursabia took up accounting at the Philippine School for Administration in Sampaloc, Manila but quit after a semester to pursue his real interest.

He snatched the following year at the Cultural Center of the Philippines dance school in Pasay City where he underwent formal training from 1983 to 1986 through a scholarship in advance classical ballet and modern dance.

Compromise

But he also took up Fine Arts, major in interior design, at the Philippine Women's University. "It was part of a compromise I made with my father, who is a certified public accountant," he said.

Upon his retirement from the stage, Ursabia was appointed manager of the CCP production department. But most of his free time was spent in his studio training his young subalterns.

Last February, his students performed for the first time at Teatro Marikina. The show, "Happy Dance," was held with the support of Wilson Go, owner of the center for the performing arts studio in Makati and CCP artistic director and vice president Nonong Jose.

"It was an interpretation of Percy classical music merged with Western music. And, on June 3, during Marikina's Inauguration festival, they performed with members of Ballet Philippines," Ursabia said.

This was followed by another performance on Sept. 16 before students and teachers from 20 barangay schools in Marikina City.

"It is inspiring to see children of the common folk perform like pros," Ursabia said of his schoolers. "They are no different from rich kids. They even show greater tolerance for intensive training."

(Heron Ursabia is a veteran and multi-awarded ballet dancer who started performing at age 17. He was with Ballet Philippines from 1986 to 1999. Among his roles were Benvolio in "Romeo and Juliet," Bluebird pas-de-deux in "Sleeping Beauty," Pas de Trois and Jester in "Swan Lake," and Drosselmeyer in "Nutcracker.")

VICTOR: Ursabia performing the role of Bluebird pas-de-deux in Sleeping Beauty. He was with Ballet Philippines from 1986 to 1999.

Police uncover alleged slay plot vs Munti mayor

By Edmer C. Tandoc Jr.

POLICE HAVE SCHEDULED SUSPECTS up security for Muntinlupa City Mayor Jaime Aguilar following reports of an alleged plot to kill him and two others.

"We have increased the level of security (for Fresnedi) based on the information we have received," city police chief Supt. Jose Mario Espino said.

He said the keyman that police learned of the alleged threat from an informant who volunteered the tip on Thursday.

According to the informant, there was a plot to "liquidate" Fresnedi, as well as the head of the Muntinlupa business permits and licensing office and a councilor.

"We are now verifying the information," Espino said.

The city public information office refused to give specific details of the alleged death threat and information offline by Mariano said they were still checking the information.

But Vicente said Fresnedi already had a suspect in mind.

Aguilar added that the alleged threat was likely to be politically motivated—which, according to the official, was pending because the mayor is on his third and last term.

Espino said the threat had not affected the mayor's schedule. Fresnedi attended the ground-breaking ceremony for the Alabang-Zapote bus-only lane.

The city government, however, has started taking precautions, including giving the mayor additional security escorts.

The Inquirer tried to interview Fresnedi but was told that his phone had been turned off.

Security guard files raps vs Manila police official

By Tina G. Santos

A STATION COMMANDER OF the Manila Police District is now in hot water after a security guard filed a string of charges against him for illegal breaking.

Charged with robbery, arbitrary detention and violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices (RA 3019), the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees (RA 6713), and Republic Act No. 9745, the complaint was filed by Daniel Luis Tolibas, 29, of Sta. Mesa, by accused Asayo at meeting him outside the police station's door service.

In his affidavit, Tolibas said Asayo had accused him of stealing a generator starter from the Technological Institute of the Philippines (TIP) campus in Quiapo where he worked as a security guard.

Tolibas said he remembered Asayo, whose wife owned the security agency where he was employed, in his employer.

On New Year's Day, said an policeman appeared at the TIP after the school but no generator starter a few days before.

For questioning

The policemen brought him to the Sampaloc Police Station, where Asayo questioned him about the lost starter.

Tolibas said Asayo began threatening him to make him admit that he had stolen the generator starter. When he did not confess to the crime, he would suffer the same fate as the other thieves detained at the station, the police officer reportedly warned him, he added.

When Tolibas refused to give in to Asayo's demands, the police official allegedly instructed his men to detain the victim.

"When I asked him to file the necessary charges against me first, Asayo began punching me in the chest and forehead," Tolibas said in his complaint.

Asayo also allegedly hit him twice on the back with a nightstick, the security guard claimed, adding that an unidentified policeman also told the other detainees to bind him inside the cramped cell.

The security guard was freed the following day after his wife paid Asayo P5,000.

Apart from Asayo, also named respondents in the case were officials Quilang and Tagarino, chief, operations and security officers, respectively, of the security agency and Insp. Carlo Manuel of Sampaloc Police Station.

Tolibas claimed that Quilang initially questioned and investigated him about the loss of the generator starter while Bartonio was the one who referred the case to Sampaloc Police Station, Tolibas's lawyer claimed, has no jurisdiction over Quiapo where TIP is located.

On the other hand, Manuel reportedly prepared and made him sign an affidavit of undertaking stating that the loss of the generator starter was due to his negligence, Tolibas said.

The Inquirer tried to contact Asayo in the Sampaloc Police Station but desk officer SPO2 Leo Marquez said the police official did not report to work yesterday. Asayo could not also be reached on his cell phone.

Santa wears a police uniform

From page A29

SUPT. GILBERT CRUZ...A real-life Santa for the past 17 years.

new organizations, Cruz has been playing Santa for close to 20 years now.

"Before, I used my own money and other projects. But friends and sponsors donated too when they saw I was serious about giving gifts to the poor. I would do it usually before Christmas, but if I'm busy, I do it after the holidays," he said.

His "bags" hold toy cars, dolls, coloring books and other educational materials.

Cruz seeks the help of fellow police officers in identifying impoverished areas and the children most deserving of the treats. A list is prepared and those on the list get invite to claim their gifts.

"I ask other policemen, former classmates where the depressed areas in their brgys are. I ask them how people are doing," said Cruz.

This led him to the community in Novaliches.

Shocking sight

"It so happened that in Novaliches, I had a classmate who told me he had leading programs in one community. He was seen there, and I was so shocked at what I saw," said Cruz.

"People there reside a living selling charcoal out of the bulgin (bulgin) and had been reselling others. I gave out toys and clothes because I noticed that most of the children had no clothes," he said.

Shortly before leaving his former station in San Juan this year, Cruz distributed his gifts from months earlier. He plans to have a similar activity in Makati, where he has been stationed since October.

Seeing the joy on the faces of recipients of his gifts never fail to move the tough cop and bolster his own.

"Most of the children would forget to say thanks, which is normal. When a child is very, very happy, that's what happens, and that makes my own happier. I'm very forgot to say thanks as they immediately open their gifts," he said.

Cruz also wants to make Christmas merry not just for kids but for everyone with Makati's Station Cops, an innovative project that is the station's way of spreading cheer this holiday season inside malls and markets around the city.

Bright idea

"I saw that other incidents of war rise with the approach of Christmas. More crimes happen the more crowded a place gets. So I had an idea. Why not put police officers in [areas] common?," said Cruz.

"First, that will provide additional security in the mall. Then, it will give cheer to kids who go shopping or strolling around the mall with their parents because, apart from [the] duty, Santa Cops also give out candies," he said.

Even when he retires from the PNP, Cruz said he would keep playing Santa to the less privileged for so long as he can.

"It's fulfilling to help someone," the police officer said. "You feel blessed because you are able to give. It only means that the more [he] has on [material] in, on fulfilled, that you are able to give. And that makes my heart feel light."

GLOBAL Pinoy
Editor Gwen Lirio
E-mail: pi_global_pinoy@inquirer.com.ph
Turn to your bookmarks
This section is dedicated to Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to ensure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

Fil-Am helps fellow nurses pursue the American dream

By Lindsitse Reroro-Barron
Correspondent

SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA—WHILE MOST FILIPINO NURSES in the United States are either working in hospitals or convalescent homes, Nelly A. Joocson chose a different path by establishing the first nursing school for minority groups here in America.

Thirty-five years after she came to the US, Joocson is now considered a leader in nursing education, giving Filipinos and other groups the chance to realize their American dream.

Her company—Nursing Care Providers Inc.—has already helped hundreds of students finish their BSN programs (Licensed Vocational Nurse) since the course was offered in 1997.

"I had always hoped of establishing a school committed to an education that fused competence and character in each person, a school that shaped an individual into an honest, productive and competent contributor to society," Joocson says.

Joocson sought accreditation with the federal government so that students of NCP could avail of scholarship grants. Her hard work paid off as NCP students can now apply for a grant with Sallie Mae Fund, the nation's leading provider of student loans which help millions of Americans afford the cost of higher education.

"It pains me to see many academic who are academically qualified to finish their nursing education but cannot do so because they do not have enough money," she says.

Building credibility

Students who are qualified to avail of the federal grant can pay their tuition in as little as one to four as $350-$450 per month.

When she came here in 1972, Joocson started as a clinical nurse working in St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco. After a short stint with the maternal and child care unit, she moved to another department: working as a nursing in-service instructor, and then later on as director of education, a position she had held before she resigned in 1986.

She was still working in St Luke's when she decided to establish her own company, NCP.

In the hospital, she developed a program that assisted foreign graduate nurses who failed a mandatory written nursing practice in the US. She also provided review classes for Filipino nurses that helped them pass their NCLEX-RN while holding the training for foreign nursing graduates.

But as soon as she left St. Luke's, Joocson found her time and energy as full-time director of her company.

Concentrating on building the school's credibility, Joocson in 1993 first offered Certified Nursing Assistants and Home Health Aide courses.

These courses were approved by the Department of Health Services and certified by the Bureau of Private Post-Secondary and Vocational Education of the State of California. The school has branches serving communities of San Francisco, San Bruno, Walnut Creek and Stockton.

"I saw the need in the community that's why I immediately jumped on the opportunity to provide the needed education to assist the people who would be interested in joining the healthcare industry," she says.

Students enrolled in this program did not only learn the basic nursing skills course as NCP had to assist a good number of them who cannot speak the English language very well.

Four years after the nursing aide/homehealth aide courses were offered by NCP, Joocson expanded the program in 1997 by offering the vocational nursing program. In that same year, the first NCP opened in San Francisco and to accommodate the growing number of applicants, a new branch was opened in Hayward which recently offered classes for part-time students to give those who work and with family financial reasons to finish the program.

Rising demand

Some 200 students are at present enrolled in NCP's two campuses. A full-time student can finish the program in a year while a part-time student can complete the BN course in 18 months.

In September 2007, NCP will offer the "bridge program" which will allow LPN graduates to finish the Registered Nursing program in cooperation with another school. NCP is planning an agreement with Holy Names University to complete the BN program with the university offering science courses.

"As soon as the vocational nursing program came to meet the demand of the nursing shortage, other schools opened also offering LPN programs. Although we only have a limited number of graduates, the school has never declines responded to the crisis situation by producing very good graduates," Joocson says.

Approximately one third of the existing workforce in the US is over 50 years of age and the average age of full-time nursing staff is 49 years. Nursing, in hospitals and nursing homes especially, is physically demanding. Older nurses are getting tired and many are no longer able to cope with the demands of shift work and the long hours. Add that to the shortage already being felt in many parts of the country and it is no wonder that many nurses are feeling burned out with plans to leave their jobs.

Corporate officials of nursing homes in the US have offered signing bonuses as much as $5,000 just to attract applicants while rates for referral fees (for people who were instrumental in recruiting a new nurse) could reach $1,500.

Based on the identified trends in the supply of registered nurses and anticipated demands, the nursing shortage is expected to double by 2010, according to a study conducted by the US Department of Health.

Can't say 'No'

With this scenario, Joocson believes that the demand for Filipino nurses will continue not only in the United States but all over the world.

"Filipino nurses have shown a different commitment to work. They are very willing to help without the facility (a chore) of staff especially on weekends when nobody wants to report for work. Most of all, they demonstrate a more caring and respectful approach in dealing with their patients," she says.

On the other hand, she noted that Filipino nurses are taken advantage of as their seven-month training nurse is seen as not knowing how to say no, even if they are already overworked.

She has also committed herself into helping her alma mater, Silliman University College of Nursing, where she received the prestigious Silliman'ian award in the field of Nursing Service six years ago.

She once headed the fundraising for the Library Book Project for Silliman University and donated $20,000, including the matching fund from the United Board Higher Education in Asia during the University's centennial celebration in August 2006.

And what does it her advise to those who want to succeed in their chosen profession? Says Joocson: "Stay simple. Think ahead. Discipline yourself. Be non-event limitations."

NELLY JOCSON with husband: "I saw the need in the community. That's why I built a school to train Filipinos who want to join the healthcare industry here."

WHERE dreams are dreamed, cherished and nurtured: The Nursing Care Providers Vocational School, the first nursing school for US minorities in San Francisco, California

Growing up Pinoy and wacky in America for all the world to see

By Cathy S. Rubas-Galindo
Contributor

STEP AHEAD, BECHAMARETTE.

A twenty-something first-generation Filipino-American mom, born and raised in Virginia Beach, Virginia, has placed the experience of growing up Pinoy in America on the world wide web via YouTube, a popular, free video-sharing Web site which lets users upload, view, and share video clips.

"Happy Slip" has become one of the most popular videos on YouTube, in a span of three months, each segment garnered a hundred thousand plus hits each time a new segment is posted by its proxy and vanity creator-director-CEO (creative-producer) simply called Christine.

"I've been writing and imitating family members ever since I was young; my mom said I should be like Carol Burnett," Christine shares. "I knew that I always wanted to be in acting, but thought I should have a skill to support that dream. So I studied to be an LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse). I didn't want to lose sight of a dream, but at the same time I didn't want to depend on my acting craft to feed me."

Christine and her sister live in New York City fulfilling their dream in the area.

Christine has signed up with an advertising agency. Her sister is active in poetry reading and with friendsome, a nonprofit organization committed to the discovery and cultivation of emerging Asian-American poets. However, Christine, who believes that humor is the best medicine, dishes out her own brand of healing laughter once a month basis through "Happy Slip" which had its maiden outing on YouTube only last September but has garnered quite a diverse following composed mainly of first-generation immigrant offspring fused all over the world, primarily in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany.

Christine shares with InfoLine readers the beginnings and inspiration for "Happy Slip".

What prompted you to start "Happy Slip"?

I'm always looking for a creative outlet and [am] thought of one day doing a one woman show, so I discovered that people could have their own "channel" on YouTube—I thought "Well, here is a way to have my own show where over I have the time for it, and the world is the audience!"

Are the family situations, dialogues really drawn from real-life? What do your parents and other relatives say when they see your portrayal of them?

Yes, I pull stories from the are from the past and might change some of the details surrounding the funny moment. But so far, the family videos are based on "classic" memories from the family. They laugh just like everybody else when they see those memories in Jpeg, sharing family get-togethers [especially during the holidays], there is always a point in the night where everyone is bored. My mom ends up making up to me and begging me "Come on! Imitate me!" as well as everyone else cheering for me to imitate different family members.

How Filipino are you? Do you still speak the language? How much Pinoy influence did you have growing up?

My parents did not speak Tagalog in or because they were afraid we would be confused in school. But due to our household as our whole lives because we were able to understand the language. We always had our big extended family around while growing up, plus our church family. So that kind of made it pretty well. So, I do speak and understand it, but only a little.

CHARTBAR: My sure shots

What are your dreams for "Happy Slip"?

Why I picked the name "Happy Slip" is not only because it is a funny phrase from the past... but it reflects what I'd like people to feel when they watch these videos. As if they "slip into happiness" while watching.... cheerful fun outcomes to just laugh and enjoy. My dream is that people would have a smile on their face when watching these little productions and that it would brighten up their day. As far as a year from now, I'm open to working on other projects that come up as a result of "Happy Slip," but still continuing to do these happy little video productions.

Any plans of doing a commercial there among the 90 Asian people in Toronto? How about coming over here?

I won't say "never" to that, but I guess it would just depend on how much time it would involve. The nice thing about video, is you just all your cues and worry less especially since you can edit it out. I would can repeatedly watch if I quite like doing the videos because I love to edit on the computer as well. They allow me to do everything I love to do!

What message do you hope to spread through "Happy Slip"?

We are such a bundle of talent and pleasing it on YouTube is making the world aware of the Filipino experience, of growing up Pinoy in America.

I would like people to see that you can be creative, funny, entertaining, and family-friendly all at the same time and have the world as your audience. You don't see that too much on TV, and you don't have to wait for the big studios to give you a chance to shine. You can create your own opportunity from your vehicle and stream what you want to do and how you want to do it.

Did you expect to get such a wide audience from "Happy Slip"?

No, I thought it may provide a few laughs, but I didn't expect to get as much a results from all over the world.

Come and visit me at www.happyslip.com and help spread the word!

The WORLD

Edna Lawrence B. Cuaso

Bush targets Iraq policy change by Christmas

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH will work on a new approach to Iraq in meetings with top advisers next week, and could announce the strategy before Christmas, the White House said Friday.

Pressure is building on Bush after he distanced himself from several key recommendations put forward by a top bipartisan commission this week, which called for a complete overhaul of US policy as it now's Iraq's slide into chaos.

He will frame his decision in talks with his secretaries of state and defense, military commanders and US ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad, as well as outside experts.

The White House says Bush carefully studied the Iraq Study Group report, and is awaiting results of several key internal reviews of Iraq policy.

"He's going to take all that information ... and lead that dozen," he the "news may demand that he wants to have in Iraq, because he knows that that's necessary," said White House deputy spokesperson Dana Perino.

The goal is for Bush "to be able to give a speech before Christmas Dec. 25), but it's not set in stone," Perino said.

The Iraq Study Group report, which warns that the situation in Iraq is "grave and deteriorating," called for most US combat troops to be withdrawn by early 2008, talks with Iran and Syria, and for a new Middle East peace effort.

Bush, who ushered on Thursday that "we need a new approach" to Iraq, also discussed the situation there with top congressional leaders Friday.

"We talked about the need for a new way forward in Iraq, and we talked about the need to work together on this important subject," Bush said.

But increasing Democratic speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, was more combative, saying: "the time for change is now, and it is apparent to the American people ... hopefully the president has got the message."

The president will visit the State Department on Monday three, senior top outside experts on Iraq in the Oval Office. On Tuesday, he will have a video-conference with military commanders and Khalilzad.

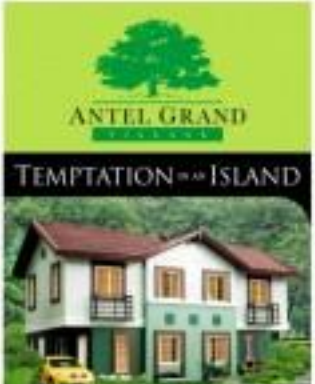
Wednesday will see Bush at the Pentagon, Perino said.

Bush has already said that even the commission did not expect him to agree with every recommendation, would agree that the White House may pick-and-choose ideas which suit it from each review of the conflict.

But James Baker, the former US secretary of state who co-chaired the study group, said Thursday that the report should not be cherry-picked.

"I hope we don't treat this like a fruit salad and say 'I like this, but I don't like that. I like this, but I don't like that," Baker said.

"This is a comprehensive recommendation designed to deal with this problem we're facing in Iraq." AFP



Palm trees, cool breeze and verdant serenities. These are just some of the exciting temptations to an island community called Antel Grand Village, where grand island living happens 365 days of the year. And it's just a short drive to enjoy the city's pleasures, should anything lure you there. Because owning a lot in this little paradise can go as low as P6,700 a month! Lots range from 80 sqm. to 300 sqm. What's more, there are no reservation fees, nor any downpayment required.

House and lot packages are also available. Check out their three home models, and you will definitely find their Asian contemporary design hard to resist—with windows, spacious living area and a lanai!

365 DAYS OF GRAND ISLAND LIFESTYLE

What makes Antel Grand Village so unique is it's the first and only self-contained community with an island setting. Verdant sceneries embrace over 200 hectares of carefully planned residential villages, commercial centers, a sports and recreation center and a sprawling 12-hectare resort and country club. In effect, a long day at work, you can blissfully unwind at the end of the day. You can take a dip in 7 interconnecting swimming pools, relax at the spa, exercise more getting much out of the gym and its many facilities. Best of all, membership to this resort and country club is absolutely free!

THE ISLANDS WITHIN REACH

While living in the contemporary setting you from the city's hustle and bustle, access to nearby destinations is not a problem. Antel Grand Village is strategically located between Roxas and Macapagal Avenues, Taytay and a few minute away from the booming industrial zone of Light Industry and Science Park 1. Even Tagaytay, this island community will be 30 minutes away from the Mall of Asia via Macapagal Avenue. And the Alabang Town Center will also be 30 minutes away through the new Daang Hari Road.

All these advantages make Antel Grand Village Suites a place where we would like you to be a part of the most exciting neighborhood this community offers. Call 7324411. First-come first-serve basis. Site island now home.

ANTEL GROUP OF COMPANIES

Air strike kills at least 20

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—THE DAY'S thing that was clear from the accounts of Friday's air strike by US forces north of Baghdad was that at least 20 Iraqis had been killed.

But American and Iraqi officials disagreed on just about every other point.

The US military said that 20 people had been killed, including two women, and that they were all insurgents tied to al-Qaida. Iraqi officials gave clearly tolls that ranged from 20 to 31, and said that the decimated were two extended families that included as many as 10 children.

An average day of violence shows just how difficult counting can be here, particularly toward as war-fatigue has set in. Many of the day's deaths came under the as they searched buildings. Soldiers fired back, killing two gunmen, but the shooting did not stop, and the Americans called in "close air support," which fired dozens of the rockets, killing 16 people. Two of them killed were women.

"Al-Qaida in Iraq has both men and women supporting and facilitating their operations, unfortunately," the military said in a statement. US soldiers found a weapons cache that included machine guns, suicide vests and conducted propelled grenades, the military said.

A military spokesperson, Sgt. Sky Lewis, declined to give the name of the village where the bodies were found but said it was 15 miles south of Samarra and 80 miles west of Balad.

"That description matches the location of the towers of Idrisji, where local police officials earlier this year accused US soldiers of killing civilians that covering it up with an air strike. The military investigated and later cleared the soldiers.

Two Iraqi officials—the governor of the province and an official from the administration of the town of Idrisji—said that the clashes had taken place in a village near Idrisji, and that it had killed members of the extended families of two brothers, Muhammad Hussein al-Jabouri and Mahmoud Hussein al-Jabouri.

A truism official in the Salahaddin governor's office said that six children had been killed. Samir Al-Sumaidi, the official from Idrisji, put the number at 13. AFP

CHRISTMAS TREE ON ANGEL ISLAND
The full moon rises over a lone-decorated Christmas tree on Angel Island, as seen from Sausalito, Calif., Dec. 6. AP

US Congress OKs India nuke deal

WASHINGTON—THE US CONGRESS EARLY on Saturday took a major step toward permitting the sale of American-made nuclear reactors and fuel to India by giving final approval to a White House-backed bill.

The Senate approved the measure unanimously following its passage late on Friday by the House of Representatives, 330-59.

It now goes to President George W. Bush for his signature.

The Bush administration and its allies contend that civil nuclear commerce is expand electricity generation in India, a booming economy that ties with the world's largest democracy—a rising South Asian power—and open up billions of dollars in trade for US companies.

Critics decried the bill as a historic mistake that would undermine US efforts to curb the spread of nuclear weapons.

Other critical opponents—by Congress a second time, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group—also needed before the agreement can take effect. That will not happen before states time next year.

Republican Rep. Henry of Illinois, chair of the House International Relations Committee, argued hope the measure will mark "the beginning of a new and ever-closer relationship between the world's two largest democracies, the United States and India." The deal worries 30 years of US policy that, until July 2005, opposed nuclear cooperation with India. Reuters

Masako turns 43, slowly recovering

TOKYO—JAPANESE CROWN PRINCESS Masako turned 43 on Saturday and said she was slowly recovering from the stress-related illness that has kept her largely out of public view for the past three years.

But her doctors say that while her condition has improved, she still tires easily and continues to require treatment after years of stress caused by adapting to palace life, including pressure to bear a male heir.

The princess spent somewhat in September after Princess Kiko gave birth to Prince Hisahito, the first male heir born to the imperial family in more than 40 years.

Masako and Crown Prince Naruhito have a 5-year-old daughter, Aiko.

"With the warm support of the crown prince, I have slowly begun to improve," Masako said in a statement. "Under the direction of my doctors, I have gradually begun to expand the number of activities I pursue, including public duties." Reuters

JAPANESE Crown Princess Masako waves from her car as she visits the Imperial Palace to celebrate her 43rd birthday with the Emperor and Empress, Tokyo, Dec. 9. REUTERS

Probe finds negligence in Foley sex scandal

WASHINGTON—REPUBLICAN LEADERS IN the US Congress broke no rules but were negligent in their handling of a scandal involving a fellow lawmaker's advances toward male aides, according to a committee said.

The House of Representatives' ethics committee issued its findings Friday after an investigation into the text-sex scandal surrounding Republican Mark Foley, who resigned on Sept. 29 amid allegations he sent inappropriate e-mails and instant messages to young aides aides working in the chamber.

Republican leaders in the House deplored "a disconcerting unwillingness to take responsibility" for addressing concerns about Foley's conduct, even though questions arose about the lawmaker's conversations to young aides more than two years earlier, the report said.

"Rather than addressing the issues fully, some witnesses did far too little, while attempting to pass the responsibility for acting to others," said the report, prepared by a bipartisan group of Democrats and Republicans.

No all, a pattern of conduct was exhibited among many individuals to evaluate willfully ignorant of the potential consequences of former Representative Foley's conduct with respect to future pages," it said.

The Foley scandal, which broke just weeks before legislative elections on Nov. 7, has been cited as a main floating factor in the Republicans' decision to hand-over the House, which was back-control of Congress for the first time since 1994.

The outgoing speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, has maintained he was not aware of the concerns about Foley until the lawmaker resigned his seat on Sept. 29. But the probe contradicted Hastert's account, stating "the weight of evidence" indicated the Republican leader was told about Foley's e-mails months earlier. AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Fire in Moscow hospital kills 45 women

MOSCOW—A fire believed due to arson broke out overnight in Moscow's drug-rehabilitation hospital, killing 45 people, emergency ministry and fire service officials said early Saturday. All 45 died before the firefighters' arrival. Deputy Emergencies Ministry spokesman Vyacheslav Lebedev quoted by the ITAR-TASS news agency, adding that 15 more people were injured. All of the victims were women, including two of the hospital's staff, as the fire started in the hospital's women's wing. AFP

Jeane Kirkpatrick, 80

KIRKPATRICK

WASHINGTON—Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, a political science professor whose support for Ronald Reagan's anti-communist policies pulled her into the post of US ambassador to the United Nations, has died at 80. She was the first woman to hold the post. Initially a liberal Democrat, Kirkpatrick championed human rights, opposed Soviet-linked communism and supported Israel.

"She defended the cause of freedom at a pivotal time in world history," President George W. Bush said today. "Jeane's powerful intellect helped America win the Cold War." Kirkpatrick's son, Stuart, said she died Thursday at her home in Bethesda, Maryland, where she was under hospice care. AP

Commonwealth suspends Fiji after coup

LONDON—The Commonwealth on Friday suspended Fiji with immediate effect after a military coup there earlier this week that it condemned as showing "total disregard" for the island's democratic government. The Commonwealth suspension added to the international scrutiny over the coup. The United Nations Security Council, the United States, the European Union and several nations have condemned the takeover. AP

Sunday SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavedra E-mail: sr_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Text or post headlines: inquirer sportsmanagers@smsmessage.ph (539-1 Globe or 286-1 Smart)

WHAT'S INSIDE Philadelphia puts grumbling star Iverson on trading block A32

TOM Rimas (left) wages a spirited last-hole battle against Korean Hwang Kyung-seon.

Cue artists lift RP spirit; jins resume quest

By Ted S. Molavedra

DOHA, QATAR—A HIGHLY PROBABLE ALL-FILIPINO GOLD-medal match looms in the 8-ball billiards event of the 15th Asian Games here today as regional bosthorn Leonardo Andam and Antonio Gabica go up against foes they have played before.

Andam, a multiple gold-medalist in several Southeast Asian Games, and Gabica, chip winner in the single-loss Miguel Arias 9-Ball Tour this year, resume play at 1 p.m. at the Al Ahlid Mobil Pompese Hall in the Aspetar Gymkana.

The 40-year-old Andam clashes with Japanese ace Hisashi Tomokane while Gabica, 31, battles Chinese Taipei's Huang Jian-chang, the only remnant of Chinese Taipei's powerful 8-ball squad after the quarterfinal exit of former world champion Wu Chia-ching.

"We have played against them (Tomokane and Huang) before and they are both beatable," said Andam, referring to matches in the legs of the Asian tour which the Filipinos, including the absent Efren "Bata" Reyes, swept.

Grandstanding stanzas

Andam overcame a grandstanding stanzas and his unpredictable with amateur rules to pip Thailand's Amnuaypornki Chevalapong, 9-8, and Gabica followed suit by halting the run of Alok Kumar of India, 9-6, in two of Friday night's quarterfinal matches.

Gabica and World Pool quarterfinalist Jeffrey de Luna compete in the opening round of the men's 9-ball before Bubbles Awat and Rhoy Ann Rosass try their luck again in the women's singles. Both Filipinas failed to make it to the medal round of the 8-ball Friday with Rosass getting as far as the quarterfinals before falling.

Campaigned and commanded by the opposition in the first four rounds in couple bowling, the tandem representing RP bidders resume play in the final blocks of the men's and women's Masters.

The bowling squad have failed to land a single medal so far despite a star-studded lineup that includes reigning world singles champion Hilary Rivera, International Bowling Federation "Bowler of the Century" Paeng Nepomuceno, former World Cup champion CJ Suarez and former world titist champions Cecille Yap, Lita del Rosario and Ace Clemente.

There is less expectation for a medal in track cycling, but the riders will be gunning to break national records when they vie in four events today featuring professional track specialists Fredd Chiaia, Ken-ok Iacino and Ivico.

Carlo Isreal and Jay Bud Morales compete in the men's individual sprint qualifying, Marites Bahit in the women's qualifying of the same event and Allie Catalan in the individual pursuit finals before a trio made up of Pedro Manigol, Jun Paul Morales and Edison Barquero vie in the team sprint finals.

"The Bible is world-class, full of professional riders and will be very competitive in all respects," said an RP cycling official, "Still I am eyeing a surprise in the individual pursuit."

The divers also take to the pool for the first time with Gino Garcia and Zando Demontiro jumping in the men's synchronized 3-meter springboard final at 4 p.m. Setsco-Head Ryan Pedregosa and Jaime Asok combine their talents in the women's synchronized 10m platform final.

Filipinos Arbor is equestrian and fencing today with Juan Ramon Lanza, Danielle Colamigo, Marie Antoinette Levine and Bella Zobel playing key roles active in the individual and team qualification in the Doha Equestrian Jumping Arena and Jean Carlo Seasoni seeing action in men's individual sabers and Molly Joyce Angeles in the women's individual epee in the Al Arabi Sports Club.

The first line of women Margarito Augusto in the 55 kg. category of the men's Greco Roman event has not been drawn and so are the opponents of netters Cecil, Montil, Eric Tejero, Eli Tibon, Johnny Arcilla, Dennis Dy and Mac Arevalo in the men's and women's singles.

Fireweight

Ricardo Abon tries to sustain the Filipinos' gains in taekwondo when the clashes with Kazakhstan's Tatiyana Khanova in the 59 kg. category at the Lusham Hall of Qatar Sports Club. Abon's sister Kathrine Kristin bagged the bronze in the flyweight class Thursday.

The men's squad of Joy Bayron, Marvin Dumandan, Michael Elliot and Gene Rondez and the ladies team of Cyra Rodriguez, Anna Espinosa, Dulce Arellano are off for the third round of the individual and team competitions at the Qatar Golf Club at 7 a.m.

Action resume in sailing as well as in canoe-kayak when Sharon Empeza is entered in the 1,000m singles and Danny Pamilar in the 1,000m canoe race, and in shoot where the team of Ronald Dalida, Dennis Capicahan and Andres Ocampo vie in the third round of the mixed team events.

In contrast to the men's Ricky Espinosa and Robert Andrew Garcia take on the rest of the world's rubber field in squash at 3 p.m.

sun CELLULAR PREMIUM

sun Triple 3 Treats
Prize Overload

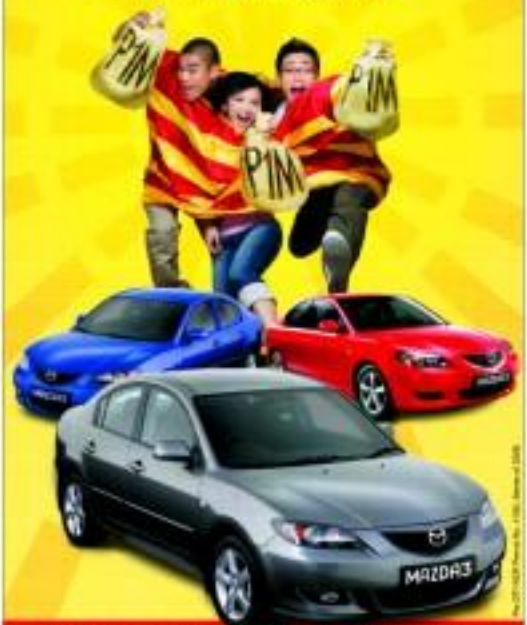
Congratulations to the groups of three who won
Canon Powershot A430 Digital Cameras

GROUP 1
JAY-AR DARILAG
KLEINE MERCADO
JOANA DELOS SANTOS

GROUP 2
JAY ANTOINETTE ARCIAGA
JANE AYLA ARCIAGA
WARREN LAGTAS

GROUP 3
ELIEZAR GOMEZ
FREDELIZ GOMEZ
LYWEISZ VAUGHN GOMEZ

Form your group now and load up.
Each member wins!
Mazda 3s and many more prizes up for grabs, including P1 Million each in the grand draw.
Watch out for next week's prize!



For more info, call the Sun Hotline 305-8333 or visit www.suncellular.com.ph.
Prizes shown may vary from actual units. See posters and flyers for details.

Pinoy bets inch closer to 1st gold

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—ATTEMAN LEONARDO ANDAM AND ANTONIO Gabica won their quarterfinal matches in the 9-ball pool singles late Friday night and assured the Philippines of at least two more bronzes added to the 15th Asian Games here.

Another victory for Andam and Gabica in the semifinals scheduled Saturday afternoon will set up an all-Filipino final and clinch the country's first gold in the 46-nation meet.

The 48-year-old Andam overcame a grueling stomach and back ailment early in the morning to edge Thailand's Amnuay-jaen Chodpong, 9-8, before Gabica improved on his last night finish in the 2002 Busan Asiad by bashing the ears of Alok Kumar of India, 9-6, at the Al Sadd Multi-Purpose Hall north of the capital.

Andam sent out as a slight underdog when he clashes with Japanese ace master Satoshi Kawahara for a shot at the gold medal today while the 34-year-old Gabica battles Chinese Taipei's Huang Kun-chung.

Huang became the only remnant of the mighty Taiwanese squad in 9-ball following the defeat of the world's number five player and world champion Wu Chia-ching to Malaysia's Ibrahim Amir, 9-6 in the quarterfinals. Amir eventually fanned in Barcelona, 3-9.

"I couldn't focus in my match against Wu Chia because I was sweating and paid a lot of attention to the rules," said Andam, whose tournament schedule this day prevented him from getting something to eat. "But my opponent gave me a chance to rest and I took it despite a few errors."

Andam gave away three tacky after getting screwed with penalties for rule infractions but he "shut didn't faze him.

"He was not that tough," Andam conceded to Filipino. "I was just watching the rules, that's why I couldn't focus. Amateur and professional rules differ a lot, and I am a professional player. But I will remember all my errors so they will not be repeated."

Gabica, a holder of two Asian Titles who now resides in Quezon City and the source to perform well in the billiards events after Filipinos were shut out of the medals in snooker and English billiards.

"My countrymen are watching at home and I don't want to disappoint them by not winning a medal," he said. "There was a lot of pressure in the earlier matches, but now that Andam and myself are already in, we will play our best to reach the finals."

Southeast Asian Games double gold medalist Bahlele mist and Rizzy Ann Bonus went toe to toe-to-toe and yielded to separate finishes in the women's division of the 9-ball competition.

Amit was halted by Thailand's Jaruthasee Autsachil, 7-4, in the round of 16, while Bonus got as far as the quarterfinal where he took a heart-breaking 6-5 defeat at the hands of China's Zhou Mengyang.

After taking a bye in the round of 64, Amit whipped Vietnam's Nguyen Hoang Lam, 9-2, and reached the round of 16 with a similar by-race 9-3 win over Iraq's Alyaski Sajaad.

Gabica, who also took a bye in the opening round, clinched his final four-and-out with emotion over Mongolia's Gombasuren, 9-3, before downing Hong Kong's Pang Yiu-Sang, 9-5, and Mali.

DOGFIGHT! Castro evades a punch from Ali Al-Meery.

RP DAILY SKED—Dec. 10

Bowling—9 a.m.—Women's Masters Final Block (2:30 p.m.—Men's Masters Final Block)

Cross-Country—8:30 a.m.—start (5.5 km girls'); Women's Individual (Jean Lorraine Bernardo, Jessa Mae Galang, Jessa Mae Galang, Jean Lorraine Bernardo)

Diving—9 a.m.—Women's Platform (Jessica Acuna, Jessica Acuna, Jessica Acuna, Jessica Acuna)

Gymnastics—10 a.m.—Women's Individual Qualifying (Daisy Ramos, Daisy Ramos, Daisy Ramos, Daisy Ramos)

Judo—7 a.m.—Men's Individual Lightweight (60 kg) (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Rowing—10 a.m.—Men's Single Sculls (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Sailing—11 a.m.—Women's Laser Radial (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Soft Tennis—9 a.m.—Men's Singles (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Swimming—9 a.m.—Men's 100m Freestyle (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Taekwondo—9 a.m.—Men's Individual Poomsae (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Tennis—9 a.m.—Men's Singles (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Wushu—9 a.m.—Men's Individual Changquan (Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo, Jeffrey Tamayo)

Myanmar lifter kicked out after failing drug test

DOHA, QATAR—WEIGHTLIFTER Than Htut Kyi of Myanmar tested positive in a banned diuretic and was the first athlete disqualified for doping at the 15th Asian Games.

Olympic Council of Asia director general Husain Al Musallam announced the positive case Saturday.

Than, who placed fourth in the welterweight 69-kilogram division, waived her right to have a B sample tested after initial urine samples taken Dec. 2 showed elevated traces of a diuretic, Al Musallam said.

Diuretics are on the list of banned substances because they can be used to mask illegal steroids.

Than, 28, won a gold medal in the month in the 63-kilogram class at the 1997 world championships in Chiang Mai, Thailand and was a silver medalist at the Southeast Asian Games last year in Manila.

Ranked ninth in the world rankings at the end of 2005, she was one of 40 athletes from Myanmar at the games.

The Asian Games dodged another drug scandal when Jordanian Ihab Abdelrahman Ahmed was cleared and he competed here despite finishing an athlete's federation dismissing seven against her.

Minutes after an AFI emergency panel's decision was announced Friday, the Games announced Ahmed was ineligible to withdraw from the games because of "procedural error."

Ahmed, 22, reportedly failed an out-of-competition doping test conducted in an Indian training camp in October.

AFI secretary Lalit Bhanot released the name of Ahmed's chaperone in a media conference Friday, then left on a flight for the Asian Games.

Ahmed was stripped of her 2000 junior world championships title after testing positive to a banned stimulant.

The AFI reversed the urgent hearing with Ahmed's Dec. 11 arraignment date in mind and, with, out elaborating beyond saying the panel's decision was in accordance with IAAF regulations, hoped that Ahmed was innocent. Indian media reported. AP

Rivero settles for silver medal

By Ted S. Melendres

DOHA, QATAR—THE FIRST TIME THAT comes to mind when you think of Mario Rivero is her hair which she dyes, well, differently at 3 feet 7 1/2, the hair makes his trademark alike.

Or her tournament courage in the 2004 Athens Olympics where, despite all odds, the then 16-year-old from Makati moved within a win away of clinching the bronze medal in taekwondo. As luck would have it, she met a Greek in a quarterfinal of an event in the Greek capital.

Rivero has since moved on. She trained day and night with the rest of "the guys" at the taekwondo gym at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and sharpened her skills everywhere.

Friday night she was supposed to be her coronation day but a caller Huang Kyong-seon stood in the way.

Rivero, who likes to be always on the offensive in the mat, changed up early but just couldn't match the South Korean's patient superiority and fell, 7-18, in the 49-kilogram final. The coronation had to wait.

But she wasn't sore this time.

Rivero commended the undaunted Philippine contingent in the 15th Asian Games here with its first silver medal, one better than the bronze Justin Brown-Joe Kathleen Fenner Mirren and the veteran lightweight Veronica Domingo finished in their respective divisions.

"I'm taking eight.

"We tried to find a way of (scoring but I (fearing) because she was taller," said Rivero. "But her experience and much earned her enough lead of the fight."

"I can honored to be given the chance to win the gold for my country. I wish and pray that my teammates will go all the way."

On the way to the finals, Rivero came from behind to top Kazakhstan's Liza Worbina, 2-1, in the quarterfinals before storming to the door to Viet nam's Bui Thi Hien of Vietnam, 9-0, the entire fighter the Filipina beat in the semifinals of last year's Manila Old Games.

But two other RP jins fell Friday night before reaching the medal rounds.

Lourdes Lourdes Lorraine Bernard Chinese Taipei's Pin Yin Hi tooth and nail in their 53 kg quarterfinals but lost by superiority after the bouts had ended at 0-0.

Reserve Juan Miroslawa III of Cagayan de Oro scored the first point but was overpowered in the second and third rounds by another Taiwanese, Liao Chia-hsing, 1-6, and bowed out of the 58-kg round-of-eight.

Taekwondo has been the only source of medals so far for the RP contingent with three, although three boxers and two billiards players have already smashed the medal rounds and are assured of at least a bronze each.

MARIE ANTOINETTE RIVERO

Taiwan thwarts India, tops women's tennis

DOHA, QATAR (UDI/CBS)—An early Saturday morning gold medal by exploiting India's weakest link in life the Asian Games women's team final title.

Chuang Chia Jung and Hsieh Su-Wei beat Sania Mirza and Shikha Uberoi, 7-6, 6-3, in a deciding doubles rubber which sealed after a marathon, gold medal match which had started 14 hours earlier and had been held up rain.

The Taiwanese duo made a point of piling the pressure on Uberoi and avoiding golden girl Mirza whose presence here had given a much boost to second Rupees as the Games.

"We played really aggressively at the net because Sania isn't rated and to compete here despite finishing an athlete's federation dismissing seven against her.

Minutes after an AFI emergency panel's decision was announced Friday, the Games announced Ahmed was ineligible to withdraw from the games because of "procedural error."

Ahmed, 22, reportedly failed an out-of-competition doping test conducted in an Indian training camp in October.

AFI secretary Lalit Bhanot released the name of Ahmed's chaperone in a media conference Friday, then left on a flight for the Asian Games.

Ahmed was stripped of her 2000 junior world championships title after testing positive to a banned stimulant.

The AFI reversed the urgent hearing with Ahmed's Dec. 11 arraignment date in mind and, with, out elaborating beyond saying the panel's decision was in accordance with IAAF regulations, hoped that Ahmed was innocent. Indian media reported. AP

Filipino chess players remain in contention

JOANNA DOCENA

DOHA—INTERNATIONAL MASTERS Dayarin Laude and Ronald Dablio and Judea Librodo bested their respective rivals in the Philippines' Mansfred Manzo, 5-0, in the 15th Asian Games chess tournament.

The lopsided victory vaulted the Filipinos into a tie for seventh to ninth places with Kazakhstan and Syria with five points.

Laude, ranked behind Rubilly Abelgas, Dablio trounced Mah Tang Kiaw and Librodo whipped Ma Li Chai to complete the sweep for the Filipinos, who were 3.5 points behind solo leader India going into the fourth round.

Top seed India, led by super GMs Krishnan Sasikiran and Dronavalli Harika, topped host Qatar, 2-1, in the last duel of early leaders. Sasikiran subdued GM Mohamad Al Modiahki, while Harika defeated Jassim Mohammed Al Sayed in the first two boards.

Qatar struck back with former world champion GM Zhu Chen's victory over GM Konaru Hampi in the second board to level the match. Grandmaster Humpy bagged the gold medal in the rapid chess competition.

Seventh seed Vietnam edged No. 6 Uzbekistan, 2.5, on victory by GM Nguyen Anh Dung over GM Mirzo Ikramov on board three. GM Duc Thien Bui of Vietnam and former world champion GM Rustam Kasimdzhanov of Uzbekistan drew their rounds as did WGM Nguyen Thi Thanh An and IM Dinh Thi Thanh Thuy in the first two boards.

Qatar (seventh), Vietnam (eighth) and Uzbekistan (ninth) are all tied with Kazakhstan and Syria with five points each.

Meanwhile, Filipino chess players are also competing in the Asian Games Chess Championship, which ends Dec. 21. Each pool consists of the Asian Games and the Asian Chess Federation.

"We still have a chance to win a medal but the players have to play well against the top players in the coming rounds," said National Chess Federation of the Philippines director Wilfredo Mudra.

Barte repels Suzuki, snares ITF Jrs crown

RALPH ERVIN SUITE PUT A FITTING FINALE TO A brilliant week yesterday.

When everybody was looking elsewhere, the 17-year-old campaigner dislodged the fourth-seeded and topped his ensuing run with a storming victory over gutsy Japanese Yoshiko Suzuki to capture the Philippine ITF Juniors Championships Week 2 boys' singles title at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Showing the kind of game that many didn't expect from him, Barte dismissed the first set before praying his killer instinct in full view to defeat the unseeded Suzuki, 6-3, 7-6 (7-5), in a little over one hour.

The victory – the first in his young career – put Barte in the same lovefest as top-seeded compatriot Kyle Joshua Tantoan who won the initial phase late week but fell victim to tourist in the semifinals.

Dazzled as the only Filipino player here with a world junior ranking or ITN.

"I don't know what to say, I'm just very happy that is a very meaningful championship for me," said Barte who finished high school from study and left his native Davao City to to boot his tennis career here in Manila.

Armed with powerful forehands and quick decision-making, Barte was part of the junior Davis Cup team two years ago and assisted campaigning in ITF tourneys in 2002.

"But all came to a head when he teamed in a 3-4 lead in the second set only to see the Japanese, ranked 476th in the world juniors, creep from behind to post a 6-5 lead.

"I got a little over confident and was really looking at finishing the match early," recalled Barte.

Set instead of getting rattled by Suzuki's game mind, Barte fought him off from the baseline, steadily keeping the ball in the Japanese's weak side to force a tie-break and prevent a potentially disastrous third set.

On the way to the championship, Barte had downed the Sandigan with Tantoan by beating second seed Bernie Chet Jin Wan, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4, in the second round and fourth-seeded Japanese Yuki Murano, 6-7, 6-4, 7-5, in the semis.

Second-seeded Jhanwin Tiseta, from Iloilo, Ilonia, outlasted unseeded Korean Eun Hee Kim, 6-4, 6-4, to nail the girls' singles title.

Tiseta, 17, made it a double after pairing with 14-year-old Norlenda Gudoyo to edge second seeds Jessica Agra of the Philippines and Jowa Goh Soon Jin of Malaysia, 6-2, 3-6, 6-2, for the girls doubles title.

The Iloilean girls also won the doubles but was with over Agra and Japanese Miss Adachi in Pasig City last week.

Gudoyo, the last world's singles champion, also won her fifth doubles title this year, winning in tournaments in Russia, Bulgaria and Bulgaria with different partners.

Top seeds Marcin Straskyny of Czech Republic managed up to Deedee in the singles final last week, and Japanese Yuki Matsuo clinched the boys' doubles title over fourth seeds Liang Chi Huang and Jui Chen Hung of Chinese Taipei, 6-2, 6-4.

RALPH ERVIN Barte smiles after beating Toshiyo Suzuki of Japan, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5 in the boy's singles finals at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center (yesterday).

Third sweep for Nike bets

ARANA

BAGUIO CITY – NIKE PROSPECTS CESAR PLDT had a sweep of the $795.00-km Invitational yesterday closing out festivities in the same brutal manner it opened its "three-peat" Visayas cycling century here.

Mark Fernando, at six-caddy from Antifonso, smoked with a one-under par 56 on the tough the Country Club for 15 points that paced the 5-caddy 137 of Ritter's 01 more robots encountered from Japanese Team Southeastern.

Four Invitational Caddies' Open champion Jerel Alada contributed 28 and Joseph Labajo seven-bid a 34 to go with Jun Bernar Jr. as Nike totaled 139 for a 23 point victory over the Cartesian-based squad.

Jane Hernandez and Sultan Jacques fired identical one-under 56s for 15 points each as John Lee de Belo formally closed out his season with a 60 points domination of Southeastern.

"What we saw is the face of the Nike team in the years to come," non-playing skipper Jeanny Mansion told the press. "These guys have shown that they are ready to play big time golf. It's just a matter of time before their scrappy own graduate to the pros."

The 10-team's margin of victory is one of the largest in the history of the 10-km, and the second biggest since Nike started its dominance in 2004 with a team built around 2004 Asian Tour finisher of the Year Jonn Augustus.

The 10 riders, 22 points are quite big," Mansion added. "Each of our players can only get better with the training routine they have."

"We offer no excuses. They (Nike team) played extremely well and deserved to win," Southeastern captain Thirdy Ravena said. "We'll just have to come back stronger next year."

Former kingpin Jun Valdez Jr. and Nike duo Jul Almonte and Jing Lagos teamed in 33s and Nike Alejandro 32 for 122 and a 107 aggregate for Southeastern.

Nike behind at third spot with 896 points was the Del Monte Golf Team followed by Mizuno Golf with 868 and Essentials Golf Club 846.

Nike's Jerel Alada topped for 10 points and Mario Labajo 32 rounded out Art's waiting for Nike over as Gino Stampi tallied 31 markers to pace Southwards.

Pacesetter Garcia and Jun Jun Pilones managed 29s and Jonathan Tamboboong fired an 27 for the Southwards team's 116 and 483 Nike robots total. NIPTDA finished with 432 points and captured third spot over Essentials Golf Club, which tallied 41.

Final standings of Nike Outdoors

54 Flight A – Team Nama Chips (474), Team Nike (458), Camp Aguinaldo (445), Team Del Monte Golf (433), Magnificat at Pilar I (429), Philippine Navy (420), Balanced Nike (418), Camp Johnson (414), Capital Golf (406), Team Mizuno (401), Subic Bay Golf (396), Malaya Par 3 (C) (3), Orchid Golf (369)

54 Flight B – Makati Shangri-La (520), USAFPac (508), Alabang Country Club (502), Clubhouse (487), Alabang Hyatt (472), Villa Caceres (471), Baguio City Golf Club (455), Team Del Monte (453), Manila Golf Club (C), Baguio City Golf Club (C), Orchid Golf (C), Subic Bay Golf (C), Team Mizuno at Baguio (C), Alabang Hyatt (C)

54 Flight C – Capitol Hills (502), Camp Aguinaldo (501), Intramuros Golf Club (C), Del Monte Golf (C), Manila Golf Club (C), Intramuros Golf Club (C), Intramuros Golf Club (C), Intramuros

Sunday SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Philandrez

One small step in therapy, one giant leap to recovery

TEJADA

By Mooney R. Castillo

PHILFHOOS IS TAKING BIG STRIDES IN ITS bid to repeat as Philippine Cup champ.

Over in the United States, Eugene Tejada, the Chamber Giants' inspiration, is starting to take those scrap-scrap steps in his soon flight to get back in living a normal life.

The victim of the most horrendous on-court disaster in the history of the Philippine Basketball Association is responding well to therapy and could be up and about in no time at all.

Tejada, according to Purefoods team physician Rolly Sandoro, can already take four steps while in the parallel bar during therapy sessions and transfer from his wheelchair to his bed with ease.

"His progress is welcome news to this basketball-crazy country, which watched in horror when Tejada lay on the Fuzion Center floor motionless, his cervical area 3 and 4 broken after a fall in a game against Red Bull last May.

"His disposition has changed a lot," Sandoro told the Inquirer over the phone. "He's happy now. You can feel it in the way he talks."

The 34-year-old Fil-American prospect has reportedly regained some of the strength in his upper body, travelling from one place to the next committed in his rehabilitation.

Tejada does therapy in his home in Anaheim, California, about a 30-minute drive to the Ira Clars Community Hospital where he goes in for a routine check up twice a week.

In such improvement has been achieved that Tejada promised the good doctor of returning to the Philippines after New Year and be the Giants' No. 1 cheerleader when the tournament reaches playoff peak.

"Eugene wants everyone (PBA fans) to know that he is doing well," Sanchez added. "He also wants to thank those who have kept on praying and have given him support through the hard times."

Back here, the Giants are Eugene's biggest memory, with the team retiring his No. 33 on the part of their jerseys just above their hearts.

The team, which is in prime position of nailing an automatic semifinal berth, also does not forget to say its prayers to coach and coal practice and games.

And the Good Lord seems to have taken a liking to the Giants and Tejada with the way things have shaped up of late.

AI era comes to an end

AFTER 11 years, The Sixers are ready to close their Allen Iverson chapter. The superstar demanded a trade but was not big on his wish. He was barred from playing against the Wizards Friday and told no longer to report to the team. →

Philadelphia puts grumbling star Iverson on trading block

PHILADELPHIA—ALLEN IVERSON'S 11-YEAR CAREER IN Philadelphia appears to be over after he was excluded from the line-up as the 76ers were routed, 113-98, by the Washington Wizards on Friday.

The superstar guard last week demanded a trade and owner Ed Snider said he was more than willing to accommodate him.

Snider said Friday he would not hesitate to ship out the four-time scoring champion.

"After all a lot of this things for this organization and I satisfaction well," Snider said.

"I think it's time for him to move on and try us to ensure (as) an organization and see where things stand."

Asked if Iverson would be traded, Snider said, "No question about it."

Gilbert Arenas scored 32 points in the crushing win, but the bigger story was the absence of Iverson after he earlier in the week told the Sixers he wanted to be traded.

Iverson was told not to report to the arena before the game and later released a statement through his agent Leon Rose in which he admitted that he expects his stay in Philadelphia to end.

"To have as it is to admit, is damage done by the best thing for everyone," Iverson said. "I hate admitting that because I love the guys on the team and the city of Philadelphia. I truly wanted to be a 76er."

Arenas (MIA 6/10) Iverson led the Sixers to the Finals in 2001, but the club has languished in the standings since then. He was the No. 1 pick in the 1996 draft and has played his entire career in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia (8-12) are heading for another losing season with or without Iverson, blowing a 20-point second quarter lead to then know foe in the Washington Center.

The Wizards, on the other hand, snapped road game after opening the season with a franchise-record eight consecutive losses away from home. They beat the lowly Knicks in New York on Wednesday night to snap the skid.

Caron Butler added 20 points and had 11 rebounds for the Wizards, while DeShawn Stevenson scored 17 points and Brendan Haywood added 12.

Chris Webber had a season-high 21 points and 10 rebounds to lead the 76ers, while Kyle Korver chipped in with 20 points.

COMPLETE BOX SCORES: WASHINGTON 113—Arenas 32, Butler 20, Haywood 12, Stevenson 17, Daniels 10, Pierce 10, Blount 0, Thomas 0, Songaila 0, Williams 0, Jamison 12. PHILADELPHIA 98—Iverson 0, Korver 20, Webber 21, Miller 10, Dalembert 10, Green 6, Kapono 2, Smith 0, Igoudala 9, Ratliff 0, Hunter 0. Quarters: 29-49-78-113 (WAS); 32-52-76-98 (PHI). 3-point goals: 9-20 (Arenas 4-8, Stevenson 3-5, Daniels 1-2, Pierce 1-3, Blount 0-1, Thomas 0-1); 6-19 (Korver 3-6, Miller 1-3, Kapono 1-2, Smith 0-1, Igoudala 1-4, Hunter 0-1, Webber 0-2). Fouls: 23 (Arenas, Butler, Haywood, Daniels, Pierce, Blount, Thomas, Songaila, Williams, Jamison) 23 (Webber, Miller, Dalembert, Green, Kapono, Smith, Igoudala, Ratliff, Hunter). Fouled out: None. Rebounds: 49 (Haywood 12) 46 (Webber 10). Assists: 25 (Arenas 6) 19 (Miller 5). Total fouls: 23 (Arenas, Butler, Haywood, Daniels, Pierce, Blount, Thomas, Songaila, Williams, Jamison) 23 (Webber, Miller, Dalembert, Green, Kapono, Smith, Igoudala, Ratliff, Hunter). Technicals: None. Ejected: None. Attendance: 11,211.

Mail and More deals PCU its first loss; Comets soar

By Jeannice W. Pupa

GAME 1 TODAY (Zamboanga Recreation Center)
2 p.m.—Marinas Gentry vs Senator Gym
4 p.m.—Magnolia vs Super PCU

THE LEAGUE NEWCOMER PULLED OFF A huge upset with a big comeback.

Mail and More overcame an improbable one in the last seven minutes to hand league-leading Super PCU its first loss, 64-63, in the PBL Silver Cup yesterday at the Gliceria College Sports Center.

The trio of Mike Rivera, Wyngaiden Tiu and Jun Ning took over in the final game to lead the Comets' climb out of an 18-point deficit, 39-57, late in the third period.

"We started out loud, we just dug deep," said Comets coach Lawrence Chongson. "It was the resolve of the players, they never gave up."

Dungaran also credited his wards' defensive game as the Comets held the Steels Masters to only six points in the fourth quarter.

The Comets rose by sustaining poor first-frame performance at 16 percent and an even more atrocious field goal shooting at 26 percent.

Rivera registered solid 16 points, including a key layup and a couple of free throws in the last 45 seconds to ice the triumph.

The Comets strung up their third straight win with 20 Quebalen leading the way with 13 points, 16 rebounds, five blocks and four assists.

Despite the loss, Super PCU remained on top at 5-1. Mail and More joined Cocktail Sims at the second spot with 4-2 slates.

In the second game, Marvin Cruz nailed a layup with 1.2 seconds left to lift the Toyota Otis Sparks to a 90-88 escape over the Manila Electric (MEC) Tigers.

The Sparks retrieved the Tigers' late push to land the victory.

"We saw what's negative in the team, we need to relax, but we also played a good endgame," said Sparks Orly coach Louie Alas, whose Sparks joined the Marikina Shoes at 3-2. The Tigers (4-4) suffered their sixth straight setback.

The scores:

First Game

(MAIL AND MORE) Go—Rivera 16, Tiu 12, Quebalen 13, Ning 10, Gonzales 2, Cruz 2, Ramos 2, Dungaran 1, Pelobello 1, Cardenas 0, Del Rosario 0, Espiritu 0, Gutierrez 0.

(SUPER PCU) Ilao—Cuarto 14, Jaime 12, Lacuesta 8, Montero 7, Nuñez 6, Rodriguez 5, Dilan 4, Balbuena 4, Tolosa 2, Abad 0, Hingpan 0, Lumbres 0, Zamudio 0.

Quarters: 15-26, 27-45, 44-57, 64-63

Second Game

(MEC) Ilao, Gilbert 30—Ilao 10, Ilao 10, Salvador 9, Villa 12, Gonzales 2, Cayabyab 4, Zamudio 2, Andres 1, Pelobello 1, Cardenas 0, Del Rosario 0, Espiritu 0, Gutierrez 0.

(TOYOTA OTIS) 90—Cruz 19, Labadang 17, Jaime 11, Sison 10, Rodriguez 10, Nuñez 9, Coronel 5, Bulaong 5, Dalisdis 4, Gonzales 2, Lacuesta 1, Ugarte 0, Manuel, Abad 0.

Quarters: 22-22, 42-42, 67-67, 90-88

Cocktail (Sims, Ilao, Ilao, Salvador, Villa, Gonzales, Cayabyab, Zamudio, Andres, Pelobello, Cardenas, Del Rosario, Espiritu, Gutierrez) vs Toyota Otis (Cruz, Labadang, Jaime, Sison, Rodriguez, Nuñez, Coronel, Bulaong, Dalisdis, Gonzales, Lacuesta, Ugarte, Manuel, Abad)

Quarters: 21-20, 37-45, 44-57, 64-63

IN THIS ISSUE
This is the new style for What's Inside /L24

Sunday Biz

Business Features Editor Margie Quiroga-Espino

Not quite the rich, spoiled kid

Lucio Tan's daughter working hard to teach entrepreneurship to youth

By Margie Quiroga-Espino

WHEN VIVIENNE KHAO Tan was seven years old, she caused a near panic in the household when nobody could find her.

Until one of the family's bodyguards looked up and saw a figure atop the three-storey service tank. It was the thought-to-be missing Vivienne, daughter of Lucio Tan, one of the richest men in the Philippines.

She recalls using the tank and wondering how it would be to climb it. So she did.

The image of a young girl climbing the 10-or-so-step ladder of the water tank may be not be so off from her image in Manila society as a **lost and spoiled child. But this writer's personal experience with Vivienne during a four-day trip to Japan, somehow painted a different picture.**

She arrived at the airport dressed in a white shirt, jeans, boots with hair tied back. **She, however, wore a three-piece diamond** earrings and necklace that had stones as big **as yours...the only piece of jewelry she wore** throughout the trip.

She only had one handbag throughout the five days. And it appears she has been using the same one for a while. The bag was placed in the x-ray machine twice because the inspector discovered a tiny sword with a red string (which Tan says is meant to drive away evil spirits). She says she keeps forgetting to take it out of her bag.

And despite her slim figure, she loves food. She would still invite you out after dinner to eat.

Vivienne admits she was what others may call a problem child, but today she is proving to be a star of a kind among the second generation of the wealthiest in the Philippines.

Unlike her contemporaries and even her siblings, Vivienne chose to strike on her **own...in an arena where her father's** clout may not be as strong. She went into the business **of education. She says she did not tell** her father of her plans. She first got a license for the Thames School of London and from **this year created the Entrepreneur's School of** Asia.

Today they have about 350 students, all groomed to be entrepreneurs.

In a recent speech in Osaka, Japan, she stated, "Some of my graduates will get a job, they will create jobs."

Tan acknowledges the irony of what she is doing now with her past. She admits she did not like school much. Which is why she says **she knows how to deal with the youth of to**day. Tan had to leave St. Jude's School be**cause she did not like its rigidity.** She ended up finishing in a relatively unknown Chinese **school called the Philippine Institute of Que**zon City.

But her determination could also be gleaned early. Which is probably why Lucio **and wife Carmen tolerated some of their se**cond to the youngest daughter's rebellion.

In elementary she hit a male classmate who kept pushing her chair out of the line. The boy complained to his mom who went to the school to accost Vivienne, then a skinny little girl. But after the mother saw how tiny she was, she cooled up and left her son.

At age 13, she had her required piano lessons. But she only wanted to play the pieces she liked, not the ones the teacher prescribed. The teacher would refuse saying the piece Tan liked was for an advanced grade. **However after learning a piece unsuccessfully** for one year, the mother allowed her to play **the chosen piece. She memorized it in one** week.

College proved a turning point in her life. She was sent to the United States after the **Edsa revolution. Despite her dislike for** school earlier on in life, she ended up with a **double degree in Math and Computer Sci**ence at the University of San Francisco.

But freshman year sent her miserable. She lived in her family's apartment and drove a Benz. Later she moved to the family mansion in one of San Francisco's affluent areas. But the family member was her chaperon who watched her every move. And imposed a 14 p.m. curfew.

By her second year, Tan must have established some of the American ways because she sought permission from her father to work. But father said no. She insisted. The father said if she works he will cut off her allowance.

She opted for the latter.

NOT QUITE SO

Pangasinan launches one product program

By Yolanda Salado-Puerino
Inquirer Northern Luzon

URDANETA CITY—WHILE THE national government has its "One Town, One Product" program, this city has its "Uniko" (through its "One Barangay, One Product") Obop project.

Residents of 14 villages on Friday tried to outdo one another with their respective booths that showcased both agricultural products and handicrafts in the first planning cycle which began nine months ago.

The project was initiated by Social Philippines Inc. (SPI) in partnership with the local government of Tiwi, Department of Agriculture, the Partido Social Action Commission, PagAbangan Inc. and Minaya Development Corp.

Aptly called "Kasanyang Kabay Ko, Kabuhayan Ko," the project involves an integrated agribusiness approach from production to processing, marketing, farmer cooperatives are assured of a market for their crops through the Minaya Development Corp., an assembler which uses the cassava as an ingredient for animal feed. Dried cassava is also used as key ingredient by manufacturer of paper and packaging materials.

Initial implementation involved a core group of 75 farmers and covered 25 hectares of land. In the process, the farmers transformed their trade from subsistence to commercial farming and generating income for their families at a more social base.

The harvest, which came soon after typhoon Nilfredo struck the province, was bountiful, coupled with an estimated additional income of P 2,626.25. The cassava cooperative helped protect construction areas during the typhoon, according to Municipal Agriculturist Leonilo Cordero.

Mang Alfred, one of the farmers involved in the program, said that Nilfredo destroyed other crops, but the barely cassava was able to withstand the typhoon's impact. Also the harvest provided his family the much-needed support during the lean season or such a critical time.

"It's a win-win program," according to Trial Bhaye Julaes Villanueva, "because it makes good use of idle lands while providing farmers additional source of income." Over the long term, the project aims to utilize a total of 100 hectares of unproductive upland farms, and provide alternative sustainable source of income to approximately 300 farmer-beneficiaries and 1,500 household members.

"Cassava is a sturdy crop, adaptable in most types of soil, does not require much care and can be harvested depending on the farmers' available time and resources," explained Art Bisda, SPI's Tiwi farmer facilitator supervisor. "We believe that cassava production can be a major source of sustainable livelihood for the Tiwi farmers," added Bisda who acts as SPI's project head and provides technical and project management support to PSAC-PagAbangan Inc. which in turn directly works with the farmers.

The project is also expected to provide additional employment to the community by creating allied industries in the form inputs businesses, trucking and hauling, cassava chipping and processing industries, agricultural machinery design and fabrication, food and beverage processing as well as animal feed production.

With the success of the first harvest, cooperating farmers are planning new cassava crops using the harvested stalks as planting materials. They are also encouraging fellow farmers in the area to join the cooperative and help harness the town's idle agricultural lands. Ten months from now, the town is looking at harvesting from some 100 hectares planted with cassava.

Elected pioneer cassava agribusiness project in Tiwi. The "Kasanyang Kabay Ko, Kabuhayan Ko" program, a joint effort of Unocal Philippines Inc. (UPI), the local government of Tiwi, the Department of Agriculture and the Parish Social Action Commission, targets to utilize 500 hectares of unproductive upland farms and provide an alternative income source to approximately 300 marginal farmers in Tiwi, Albay. The first cassava harvest yielded 50 tons of cassava from 3 hectares of previously idle lands in the municipality. UPI, which pioneered geothermal operations in the country, is now part of Chevron Corp., the world's largest private producer of geothermal steam.

Unocal pioneers cassava agribusiness project in Tiwi. The "Kasanyang Kabay Ko, Kabuhayan Ko" program, a joint effort of Unocal Philippines Inc. (UPI), the local government of Tiwi, the Department of Agriculture and the Parish Social Action Commission, targets to utilize 500 hectares of unproductive upland farms and provide an alternative income source to approximately 300 marginal farmers in Tiwi, Albay.

LIKHA: Items created from recycled materials.

RITA ANDREA QUINDOZA LIBOON / INQUIRER

But this year, the city government went aggressive and encouraged the other villages to come up with their projects.

Now, all 54 villages have both local products, mainly sourced by women residents and village leaders who belong to their respective associations.

"There are many residents who are unemployed. This is making our people have to earn a living. They are happy now with just a small capital they are able to make their businesses grow," Perez said.

The fair featured the versatility of the local products.

A booth showed colorful flowers made from used sheets of bond paper, newspapers, discarded plastic, candy wrappers and grocery bags. In another booth displayed brooms (sacks made) made from local grass.

Another booth showed locally manufactured dishwashing products, fabric softeners and sanitizers.

Many booths were filled with processed food (peanut butter, native cakes, preserved fish, processed meat, pickled bamboo shoots and tuna-ipa), woodcraft, bamboo and rattan products, woodcarving, pen and brush agricultural products.

Town residents with disabilities were given a chance to become businessmen. They were formed into an association and given a loan for orderly printing presses.

Vice Mayor Charlemine Cruz-Guico said the city government helps the associations sell their products by bringing visitors and buyers to the backyard" factories."

She said the city has no distinct product, "so why not capitalize on the products of each barangay?"

She said the city planned to put up a "Pandaluang Uanan" where all products would be sold.

Cassava seen to become town's next major crop

FOR UPLAND FARMERS IN TIWI, Albay, the humble but versatile cassava is now becoming a viable crop, thanks to a pioneering agribusiness project that transcend cassava farming to the commercial scale.

Last Oct., 50 tons of cassava were harvested in the barangays of Mishia, Libong, Libjo and Nagsimbagan to successfully culminate the full planting cycle which began nine months ago.

The project was initiated by Social Philippines Inc. (SPI) in partnership with the local government of Tiwi, Department of Agriculture, the Partido Social Action Commission, PagAbangan Inc. and Minaya Development Corp.

Aptly called "Kasanyang Kabay Ko, Kabuhayan Ko," the project involves an integrated agribusiness approach from production to processing, marketing, farmer cooperatives are assured of a market for their crops through the Minaya Development Corp., an assembler which uses the cassava as an ingredient for animal feed. Dried cassava is also used as key ingredient by manufacturer of paper and packaging materials.

Initial implementation involved a core group of 75 farmers and covered 25 hectares of land. In the process, the farmers transformed their trade from subsistence to commercial farming and generating income for their families at a more social base.

The harvest, which came soon after typhoon Nilfredo struck the province, was bountiful, coupled with an estimated additional income of P 2,626.25. The cassava cooperative helped protect construction areas during the typhoon, according to Municipal Agriculturist Leonilo Cordero.

Mang Alfred, one of the farmers involved in the program, said that Nilfredo destroyed other crops, but the barely cassava was able to withstand the typhoon's impact. Also the harvest provided his family the much-needed support during the lean season or such a critical time.

"It's a win-win program," according to Trial Bhaye Julaes Villanueva, "because it makes good use of idle lands while providing farmers additional source of income." Over the long term, the project aims to utilize a total of 100 hectares of unproductive upland farms, and provide an alternative sustainable source of income to approximately 300 farmer-beneficiaries and 1,500 household members.

Filipina tasked to inspire Japanese women

By Margie Quiogue-Espino

OSAKA, JAPAN—VIVIENNE K. Tan, daughter of tuipan Justo Tan, was recently tasked to join top businesswomen from Asia to inspire Japanese women in the possibilities and potentials of women in Asia.

The problem Japan faces is aging population and the gradual help of women is deemed to be more critical than ever. The number of women who want to work in Japan is decreasing, in the same time, few want to have children.

The forum was spearheaded by Ohta Ryuzo, Japan's first woman governor.

Tan is one of the founders of the Entrepreneurs School of Asia, an 11-year old school of requires its students to set up a business overseas before getting a diploma. She was recently named one of the 35000 awardees for business education and entrepreneurship.

The Japan-Philippines economic incorporation in the "Pasmin Pioneering New Business" session of the Kyo Asian Business Women's Forum held last June 23-30 in Osaka, Japan's industrial capital where companies like Panasonic and Nissin were born.

The other women included Times Group of China president Wang Han Lin, considered as the richest business woman in Zhongguancun Science Park, the Silicon Valley of China. Another speaker was Akiyona Eda, president of Aeki Corp., the second biggest cosmetics firm in the world, who started the company just 11 years ago.

In her talk, Tan traced her beginnings as a child of "one of the most accomplished businessmen imagined in the Philippines covering some of the largest companies in banking, manufacturing, airlines, mining, retailing, etc."

Despite this however, she said her life "was not necessarily a bed of roses."

She stated that while her last name opened doors, "traditions of our Chinese culture and belief systems suggest that the torch be passed and leadership of the family empire be transferred to the eldest son, acknowledge and personal respect is not totally given to me due to my young age, female gender, second generation rank."

"Other people expect me to continue the legacy by being a 'carbon copy' of my father. Although my own personal desire is to inject "change" to whatever industry I get involved in," she stated.

After her studies in the US she and their sister as a sportswear designer, Tan was called back to help with PSE, after her father acquired it in the early 90s. But she only stayed with the airlines for two years.

She said the street kids begged her to find that she can create, that we are way to work hard in impact on lives.

"Being away in the US for 18 years, veiled me to what was happening in a third world country like ours," she said.

She told the Japanese audience that 40 percent of Filipinos lived below $1 a day while 30 percent of Metro Manila was covered with slummies and floods.

At that point, I wondered, "What could I do to help?"

She said her father has 250,000 employees but if you include the employees of businesses dependent on Tan's companies, "my father would directly and indirectly be employing 1 million people."

"Imagine the impact of one entrepreneur in the whole society. Imagine more, if as an entrepreneur like my father can be multiplied tenfold."

Her husband of her father who employs one million people and

VIVIENNE Tan with Osaka Gov. Ohta Fusao holding the bunga sana Tan presented her.

said "imagine if I could multiply my dad 10 times? More entrepreneurs means more jobs. Where can you find them? Are they born or are they made?"

Tan's conclusion is that entrepreneurship should not be a birthright of a few. "I believe entrepreneurship can be taught." Thus she set up a school...

Tan cited cases in the Philippines, the growth of new businesses are started by women but one out of 10 fail.

Prior to the Tan Entrepreneurship School of Asia, Tan and her partner Joel Santos, a venture capitalist, acquired a controlling stake in Thames International Business School, a UK-based school, then allows local graduates to pursue further studies in partner school abroad.

Early this year, they decided to change the name to ESA, even pursuing a tie-up with the Zhejiang Youth College of China (ZYC), to teach entrepreneurship.

Tan's talk elicited reactions from the floor as well. Chat speakers.

Siew Jung-mae, who developed original designs in motifs based on Korean traditional patterns, said police during the lecture, that she will encourage Koreans to study in ESA. There are very few schools that teach entrepreneurship in the world today.

Rukhsin Wattanavongchai, chair of Thailand's Thailand Co. Ltd., and Thai Toshiba Electric Industries Co. Ltd., said during the press conference that she learned from Tan.

The other women in the forum related their own experiences in setting up their own businesses.

Akiyama for example started a business to be able to spend more time with her husband. She said she and her husband were then pursuing careers and hadn't seen each other.

Hidemitsu Ito, president of Yume No Machi Soiri Global Co. Ltd., wanted to take care of her son so she did home-based consultancies. He identified upon the idea of delivering bento box meals for workers who would prepare her son's lunch lunch.

Food firms' role in sustainable agri stressed

FOOD MANUFACTURERS, consumers and farmers should all take a proactive role in ensuring the sustainability and profitability of the agriculture industry to ensure long term quality food supply.

This was emphasized by Agriculture Undersecretary Jose Tan, during the First Sustainable Agriculture Initiative (SAI) Platform-Philippine Conference, a gathering initiated by Nestle Philippines Inc. (NPI).

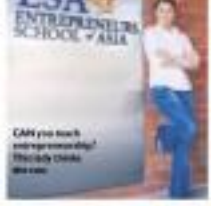
NPI's mother company Nestle S.A. in Switzerland, is one of the first companies in the world to set up SAI Platforms in Europe – a platform that has either already benefited or laid the groundwork for sustainable agriculture development in several countries.

The conference seeks to duplicate these efforts by bringing together the country's leading food manufacturers and government agencies and nongovernment organizations concerned with food production.

"Progress here and elsewhere has enacted a heavy toll on food production," observed Ross. "This is why we need to ensure the needs of the present without risking the needs of the future."

NPI CEO Sandra Sandiburan echoed his statements. "This is why we in the food industry should share practices and experiences that will ensure sustainability for our business and will economically sound point of view," he said during the conference.

The SAI Platform in European, founded by players in the food industry to support the development and communication worldwide of the need for sustainable development.



Not quite the spoiled rich, kid

Francisco Ki

Later on she realized she had to do this—her earnings were lower than her allowance. But she stood her ground and worked odd jobs—first as a receptionist, then to the backrooms of an IT firm.

Her parents, after seeing her work, the simply said "I didn't find any meaning in life at that time."

But soon she found a more lucrative job—tutoring math to rich kids in the Bay area.

She charged $20 an hour by

tutoring done in school and $30 an hour for home tutoring.

One time the mother of her teens saw the Benz parked outside and asked if it was hers. Knowing she will not get even jobs if she says yes, she simply said it is her roommate's.

She recalls there were times she ran out of cash but she was too proud to ask for father. She continued to work until graduation. One time, to see if she can save taxes and to extend her stay in the United States,

she even applied for a job with the FBI. Although she passed the first exam, she could not pass the interview part because she was not a US citizen. The FBI would have provided tuition support during college and is exchange she would have had to work for the agency for five years.

It was not meant to be. After finishing at PSE she studied fashion at the Fashion Institute in Design and Merchandising in LA. With a partner, she set up a sportswear line using silk. They used a technology that removed the sheen from the fabric, making the silk and natural-looking. But, to see if she can save taxes and to extend her stay in the United States,

changed the S to V for her name.

It was sold in boutiques in California and she was already making plans for the same set, when her father asked her to help with Philippine airlines, which Lucio had just acquired.

That was 1995.

Despite the fact that she was COO—child of the owner, she could not back the internal politics and intrigues in the airlines. Plus something was bothering her.

The poverty in the country bothered her and it occurred to her that the way out was for people to be employed. And the ones who will employ them would be entrepreneurs. So she decided to create entrepreneurs via a school.

ESA is the first institution in Asia focused entirely on the education and research of entrepreneurship. It also has a program to help aspiring entrepreneurs where the chance are given to the poor to help them finance their dreams.

At 58, Tolentino says "the variety of my life remains unfinished. I know there will be other worthwhile endeavors in store for me." (This author was invited to the First Asian Business Women's Forum in Osaka by ESA and the Osaka government.)

'People, tools, partnership and passion to perform'

Pharmaceutical executive does balancing act in competitive industry

THE PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY IS A multibillion-dollar business. The race to discover new drugs, improving on existing medicines to relieve and cure diseases and ailments, and increasing people's awareness of these latest developments continue every day—which is why it's no surprise that this business can be a challenging, albeit stressful one.

Pei Tim Tolentino, president of Pharmalink Philippines, has chosen to build his whole career in healthcare. "My first job in the industry was as a medical representative for one of the leading pharmaceutical companies in the country," shared Tolentino. He moved quickly to various positions in product management, sales operations, marketing and business development.

Tolentino eventually ditch the corporate ladder. In 1987, he joined a multinational pharmaceutical company and rose to various positions including regional management for marketing in Asia based in Singapore.

In 1995, he got his first country management assignment in the Philippines and later appointed to start a company in Indonesia. Tolentino joined Pharmalink in 2000 to head the company's operations in Indonesia. After his stint as Pharmalink Indonesia's country manager, he moved back to the Philippines.

His experience in the healthcare business has truly equipped Tolentino with the learnings and expertise that helped him build the Philippine operation. He also lives by four principles that guide him not only in managing Pharmalink, but in his professional life as a whole. These are "people, parameters and tools, partnership and the passion to perform".

"To any organization, the people are the greatest asset," said Tolentino. You may have the best product but without the right people in premises, it will end up to nothing." The kind of people you have will define the quality of the organization you are in and the quality of services you deliver or can participate." Setting parameters and tools is also important to Tolentino.

Likewise, Tolentino puts strong emphasis on partnership. "A 'partnership' backed by strong team spirit among members of the organization and with business partners make it easy to deliver expectations," related Tolentino. Solid partnership with medical communities and trade are also essential.

His passion for excellence in the industry he is in is what Tolentino desires to share with his colleagues. "Our passion is behind in Pharmalink will drive us to deliver the performance that is expected from us."

Leading a company that operates in a competitive industry can be tough and challenging, especially when it comes to balancing work and personal life. But for Tolentino, one of the first lessons a leader must learn is how to give up. "You have to give up many time for yourself and for personal endeavours. The time I have now to sport either at work or with my family and relaxing God."

While he may have given up on golf and tennis—two things he used to love doing—Tolentino nonetheless found ways to relieve the stress of a hectic work life. "I usually go jogging, and at home I have basic gym equipments."

TTO Tolentino at Pharmalink

Most admired pharma firm

SCHARTS, a PHARMACEUTICAL FIRM, has been recognized by MeAD Mena as the Most Admired Pharmaceutical Company for 2006.

It took a leap from No. 2 in 2005 to No. 1 this year. Med Ad News, a UK publication in the global health industry has a readership of more than 30,000—majority of which are top executives within the pharma industry.

Novartis was set up 10 years ago. The organization is born out of one of the largest mergers in March 1996—Ciba-Geigy and Sandoz. Novartis is organized into four divisions:

1) The Pharmaceuticals division which focuses on innovation-driven prescription medicines;

2) Sandoz—a leading global supplier of generic pharmaceuticals;

3) Novartis Consumer Health which comprises OTC (over-the-counter), Animal Health, Medical Nutrition, Zentiva (formerly Ishtar & Salty) and Ciba Vision;

4) Vaccines and Diagnostics—Vaccines and Chiron, the blood-testing and molecular diagnostics unit (newly acquired).

CEO of Novartis Pharma, Thomas Ebeling says, "Its our energy and for our rich and innovative pipeline, our portfolio of new medicines with blockbuster potential and our track record of strong performance is a real source for the excellent job our associates are doing around the world. This makes me feel proud. These accomplishments are possible, thanks to you and your hard work. As we have seen in our last quarterly results, great products and great people remain the main drivers of our business success."

MOST OUTSTANDING CITY MAYOR AWARD is presented to City Mayor ALFONSO S. CASURRA of Surigao City by Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel during the 2006 Local Government Leadership Award Awarding Ceremonies held at the Palma Room of the Philippine Senate Building on November 29, 2006. Looking on is Prof. Jose V. Abueva, Professor Emeritus of Public Administration and Political Science, University of the Philippines; Senator Edgardo Angara; Magdalena Mendoza, Vice President of the Development Academy of the Philippines; Center for Governance and Brother Armin Luistro, President of the De La Salle University System.

CONGRATULATIONS

HON. ALFONSO S. CASURRA
City Mayor
Surigao City

MOST OUTSTANDING CITY MAYOR OF THE PHILIPPINES

From:

BENATUAN MINING CORPORATION
F.E. BORJA TRADING AND MINING CORPORATION

Benguet goes silk

From page B1

Memorial State University in Bacnotan, La Union, are the only schools in the country offering sericulture on a major field of study, she said.

But Tenorio said land lack is hobbling the full growth of the industry. "We need tons of the raw materials to process the cocoons into fabric. It is a large scale to supply a growing demand for silk fabric," she said.

Tenorio agreed, saying that while Kapangan could produce the raw silk, it still could not supply the domestic demand for indigenous formal wear due to the inability to process its cocoons for business.

Tenorio said Kapangan could cash in on an untapped market—government officials and employees who are required to wear formal attires made out of indigenous tropical fibers.

Kapangan's samples of formal wear were exhibited during the Fine Benguet Silk Fashion Show at RIO on Nov. 27 to mark the province's 106th foundation anniversary.

Datrix Pedrosita, provincial tourism officer, Tenorio and Cabling joined hands in tapping local designers who fashioned the silk materials for the show.

The models were public officials led by Benguet Gov. Nestor Mallillin, Vice Gov. Clemencia Pedro, la Trinidad Mayor Florice Fong-ann, Leon and their wives.

Pedrosita said 35 formal attires were paraded during the show and among designers were Nicole's Boyet Dejon, Wanda's Geanna, Tappo Ethnic Wear and Top-shift showed their own silk designs.

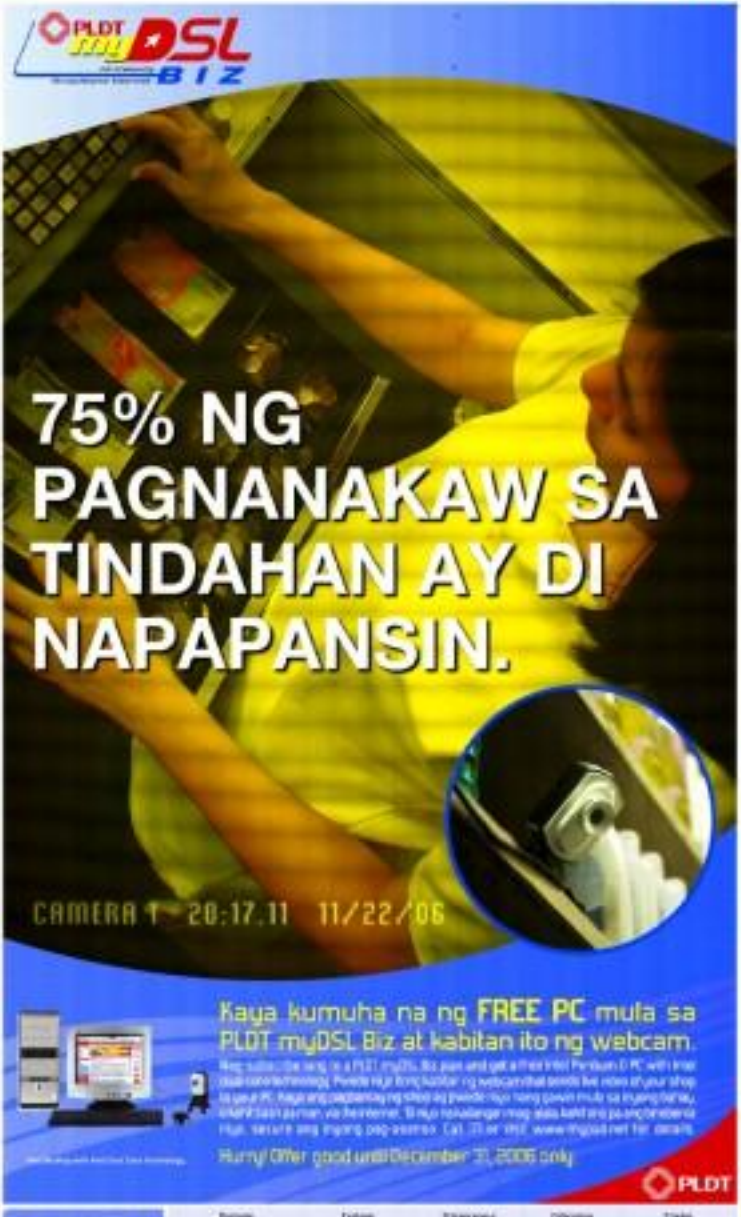
Tenorio said 126.25 kilos of fresh cocoons were used to produce the fabric used for the fashion show. Kapangan, she said, could produce 75 to 100 kilos of cocoon every two months.

Eight kilos of cocoon can produce a kilo of raw silk which, when woven, can also produce 12 meters of fabric, she said.

Kapangan sells its cocoons at P120 a kilo. Buyers usually come from La Union since the DMMMSU in Bacnotan has weaving and treatment of the fabric after it leaves the cocoonery houses.

Sunday BIZ

Benguet goes silk



Text & photos by Delmar Carlos
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—This province's silk industry is still rearing its cocoon but given enough capital to loom its fabric, it could weld dress-up a wedding entourage in shiny silk finishes.

This early, fashion designers have raved over the quality of silk the province has so far produced, making it its finest A material.

The first batch of barong tagalog made visa your easily caught the fancy of professionals who paid P3,700 for a piece.

Narda Capuyan of Narda's, producer of the popular "Ifak," an Ifugaonian woven fabric, said Benguet's silk would make a name in the near fact because of its "very cool smooth" quality.

"What makes the province's silk unique is its being indigenous and "wildsilk," which any designer worth his salt will readily notice, she said.

Cynthia Tabora, owner of Heaven's Touch Pinecones and Coordinators, said "Wildsilk means the silk fibers were finely combed and well loomed."

This is the kind of silk that can easily create **its own niche where mediocre[s] will in Manila's** haunts and fashion world, she added.

Kapangan is feeling the province's 11 towns in cocoon and silk production, in fact, **it has made overtures** its official entry in the Department of Trade and Industry's One Town One Product (Otop) program.

Right now, 10 former members of the Kapangan Environmental Livelihood Multipurpose Cooperative are into cocoon rearing.

Kapangan Mayor Rogelio Lacio said they are cultivating 14.25 has of mulberry farms, the main source of food for thousands of silkworms that would later become cocoons.

"It's a promising alternative livelihood for our farmers, aside from strawberries, salvia, kiniwesan [red dye] and cauliflower," he said.

Fe Bongat, head of the Benguet Fiber office, said the Fiber Industry Development Authority (Fida) and the Philippine Textile Research Institute (PTRI) had been providing all the **technical support to revive the industry.**

Japanese volunteers introduced silk production in the province through the Benguet State University but the effort became dormant, until Lolita Cabling, BSU professor and provincial tourism council chair

"Today, only BSU and Don Mariano Marcos

COCOONS being raised

DYED silk fabrics from Kapangan's silkworms

SUNDAY, DECEMBER PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Lito Cheb Baral-Formoso

Gifting with meaning

Text by Margie Biaga-Reyes
Photos by Rudel Reoral

Handmade products from a livelihood foundation are perfect gifts that foster the true meaning of Christmas

WANT TO DO SOMETHING meaningful this Christmas? Why not buy a napkin ring, a key chain or a necklace and feed a hungry family from the depressed areas of Pasco and Pandacan, Manila?

So, whether it's a single or wholesale purchase, it goes a long way in alleviating the plight of families landing grocery every day, especially those with helpless children.

The Families and Children for Empowerment and Development Foundation, Inc. (FCED) has been providing assistance to the poor through various livelihood projects in 12 barangays in Districts V and VI of Pasco and Pandacan, Manila.

FCED was founded in 1987 to respond to the needs of the growing number of street children in Pasco and Pandacan areas. The organization conducts education sponsorship and support, health and nutrition, early childhood development and family-strengthening programs.

"Our mission is also to provide opportunities for the education, skills training and increased income of street children, youth and their families," says Lou Bautchume, FCED livelihood coordinator.

The livelihood projects consist of handmade products. The crochet items are mainly done by women—lolomders, widows and solo parents. These handmade and knit also help in the production by scrambling, binding or painting the goods.

"They are being paid by the number of pieces they finish a day," Bautchume says. For instance, a person gets P28 for a completed Christmas star sold for P42.00 apiece. That's more than half of the retail price.

Training programs and seminars on handicrafts are held every so often in various barangays to update their skills.

Merchandise on sale includes intricately designed bed rugs for P650. All-purpose shoulder bags with floral designs range from P79-P250. Study napkin rings are P20 apiece.

Others: mini diaries, P35; picture frames from recycled newspaper, P68; ovenbarred infant bonnet, P68; key chains, P30; multi-hued throw pillows, P180 and above; and attractive beaded necklaces, P190-P250.

But what stands out among the handmade items are the specialty products created from recycled materials such as newspapers and the yellow pages. Rolled, woven, glued and painted, the materials are metamorphosed into colorful decorative Christmas decor like stars in different sizes and colors, picture frames, letter container or basket-and-others.

The group offers its products either on consignment or pre-order basis.

FCED office is at 1120-H, Metalink Extension, Pasco, Manila. Call 3626957 and 3891368.

E-mail the author at vbggs@inquirer.com.ph

CHILDREN'S hour greeting cards illustrated by Lianne Uychiaco and Manny Baldemor

This Christmas, it is not only easy to help others but also good for your heart

CENTER notebook with Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's "Mother and Child"

Wise gifts

By Constantino C. Tejero

CHRISTMAS IS NOT Christmas without the giving. That's a cliché, of course, but it carries with it the weight of centuries of spiritual wisdom.

In support of bright but poor children, Ayala Foundation's Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education (Center) is selling merchandise this holiday season.

The main item is a Federico Aguilar Alcuaz artwork, "Mother and Child," a piece painted with a heartwarming image of maternal love. It sells for P5,000—surprisingly affordable, considering that it's an Alcuaz.

This image is reproduced on canvas paper items. A regular notebook, with cover in black, beige, white or yellow-orange, sells for P150. A pocket notebook goes for P50, while a memo pad is P75.

There are also note cards (box of 12 pieces) for P900, and gift tags (box of 12 pieces) for P60.

With the Alcuaz imprint, such humble stuff become classy items, whether as personal gifts or corporate giveaways. For orders, call Sarah Sevilla at 7521171, or you may visit the Center's kiosks at Glorietta and Ayala Town Center.

But why indeed, despite these talented kids from economically disadvantaged families and not mindless copywriting drone even beyond the holiday season? Center holds office at 10/F BPI Bldg., 6768 Ayala Ave. cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

Another such project in the use of Philam Life for Children's Hour Philippines, a full-fledged fundraising and grant-giving body that helps marginalized Filipino children.

Children's Hour has an endowment fund and it does projects for the benefit of children in conflict with the law, children involved in armed conflict, children of migrant workers, commercially and sexually exploited children.

This time it is selling Christmas cards with reproductions of selected paintings, art entitled pieces by Lianne Uychiaco and "Books to Among Nature" by Manny Baldemor.

The greeting card sells for P85 and comes with P15,000 worth of personal accident insurance coverage for Malaya for the sender or the recipient. Call 7521180, or e-mail cash@childrenshour.org.ph.

Meanwhile, Pathways Philippines of the Ateneo runs fair merchandise to benefit scholars. This Christmas, it is selling coffee packs.

Call 4360001 local 4000 to 40 and ask for Belvie Nobile. Or visit Bellarmine Philippines at Abiegal Hall, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC.

So get your pack of coffee now and enjoy it. And it is not only easy to help others but also good for your heart.

Ability, artistry and mercy in a card

Cards designed by an artist with cerebral palsy fittingly celebrate the holidays

By Cecile V. Moral

A PURCHASE of greeting cards from the Circle of Friends Foundation Inc. (CoFFI) will help provide livelihood to disabled Filipinos while helping their rehabilitation.

Designed by Rina Pangan Dizon-ga, with her husband Alan, the cards depict the iconic poinsettia in stained colorful pronunciation on paper, and come in set boxes of 12.

Dizonga suffers from cerebral palsy.

The artist and its work, a program that pushes for the sale of artworks by talented artists with physical disabilities, is only one among many of CoFFI's projects, which also include Wheelmobile, a transport service provided for persons on wheelchairs. It also supports the programs of Tahanang Walang Hagdanan, including the charity home's recycling efforts.

Dizonga's works come not only in greeting cards, but also postcards, gift tags and book markers, like her another card collection focusing on the lizard design.

The Dizonga greeting cards sells for P900 for a box of 12 (4.75" x 3.75"); P1,100 box of 12 (4" x 5"). Dizonga postcard for P75/box of 10; gift tags at P20/box of 10; and book marks P30/each. The Lizard Collection goes for P100/set of 10.

The printing of the cards were sponsored by individual and corporate donors and some private organizations.

Call 4653888, 09173430106, email register@ atigalad.net, or visit www.coffi.net.

Send a card, save a child

By Rose A. Jacinto

Unicef cards and gift items help the UN agency better the lives of children

NOW ON ITS 60TH YEAR, the Unicef holiday greeting cards have become a "Send a card, save a child" tradition."

Not presents from sales of the cards go a long way to fund various Unicef programs in the country, such as the Early Childhood Care and Development, Child Friendly School System; Health and Nutrition; Emergencies and Disasters Assistance; HIV/AIDS Education; Children at Risk; Local Governance; Social Mobilization.

Christmas greeting cards designed by homegrown artists Manuel Baldemor and Willie Mitchel are among the top choices for Filipinos.

A set of Baldemor's "Pilgrimage," 10 cards at 11x15.5 cm, costs P500; his "Carolling" set, 10 cards at 12.7x19.5 cm, is pegged at P650.

Mitchel's "Home for Christmas," 10 cards at 11x15.5 cm, is priced at P500.

All are come with white envelope.

Departing from native motif, there is also the Christmas Spirit Collection, art masterpieces of the spirit of the season; snowfun, playful scenes of children at play; Christmas Markets, traditional landscapes and holiday's excitement; Contemporary Bells, gems, golden bows and warm tones representing the story of Christmas.

All come in standard 11x15.5 cm in (Set to 10 designs per set of 10 greeting cards) with white envelope, P500 per set.

There are also the "Minis," sets of 10 cards at 8.5x13 cm for P220. Contemporary Christmas Minis, colorful scenes with bold graphics and silver ink accents, come in five designs. Trendy Minis is a collection of upbeat designs suitable for any occasion.

For Asia-Christmas Minis, there are birthday greeting cards available in Birthday Celebration, a set of 10 cards in 10 designs at 12x16.5 cm, suitable for all ages; P280 per set.

Also available are Keep in Touch, a selection of 10 unique designs with silver foil accents, P380; 50th Anniversary One World, seven round greeting cards of die-cut mosaique of peace, P400 per set of 10; Thailand Hand-made, cards embellished with pressed leaves and gold foil accents, with inserts for personal greetings, P400 for a set of four 12.2x17.5 cm cards.

Unicef mugs include Hippo! Mug and Chef, Chen's Mug, or P400 each. IAD Dishwasher- and microwave-safe). Educational toys for 1 year-old and up are Animal Drawing Boxes, 16 blocks different sizes in a cardboard storage box, P820. Blade to the Philippines is Mount Pinatubo, which fits the size of 13x13.5 cm postcards. It comes with a gift box, P340. Fish Flash Box for children is water- and shock-resistant, P500 each (battery not included).

Still down for grown-ups include Photo Desk Diary with images of children from the world over that stands as reminders of what Unicef stands for, at P776. It reminds one photo for each week; a week to view; 2006 and 2007 year at a glance; 2006 and 2007 planners; work numbers; international holidays; and holiday pages. It comes in hard cover and spiral binding; protective cover case and diary, 174x11cm.

The Unicef Pocket Diary bonded in black leather is a classic lizard gift item. It contains appointment slots, landscape week to view; 2006 and 2007 year at a glance; 2006 and 2007 planners; work numbers; international holidays; information for the international customs; notes and address pages; ribbon page marker and diary At 17.5x9.5 cm, it's P670.

Over the last 10 years, Unicef Manila has raised P60 million to support numerous projects and programs for Filipino children. Call 911.0144 to 61.

UNICEF Christmas Collection 2006

FOREST Tenor "Heaven on Earth" is on on Dec. 29-30 at CAP John Hay Convention Center Garden Wing

Christmas in Baguio

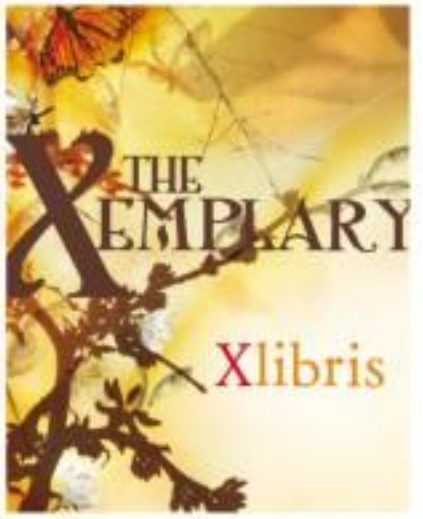
WHETHER TO SPEND CHRISTMAS away from home but don't want the expense of going abroad? Why not go to Camp John Hay Manor in Baguio City?

The manor has scheduled activities starting Dec. 16. The University of Baguio Christmas Voices Chorale will perform their Christmas medley at the lobby Dec. 24-25, 6-7 p.m. At the Pause Bar, you can enjoy romantic piano music, live bands and Irish coffee 6 p.m.-12 midnight.

Traditional Filipino goodies and other treats will be offered at The Manor Garden Merienda (Saturdays Dec. 16-Jan. 1, 3-7 p.m. From Dec. 1, Le Chef Deli will have a Gingerbread House and other Christmas goodies. On Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Mass will be held 5 p.m. at The Manor Garden. At Christmas Eve buffet will be served 6-10 p.m. It will be followed by the Christmas Dinner Concert at 8 p.m. The Anabe Room Buffet will be served 10:30 a.m.-2:30 a.m. On Christmas Day, there will be a brunch buffet.

Forest Tenor "Heaven on Earth" will be held Dec. 29-30 at CAP John Hay Convention Center Garden Wing.

On Dec. 31, New Year's Eve Mass will be held 5 p.m. at The Manor Garden. At 12 midnight, there will be a fireworks display i.e. Chef will serve a New Year's Day brunch buffet. Jan. 1. Call (02)8426892, 8426951, (02)8975755, 8976524 or Baguio at (074)4446001 to 50, fax (074) 4446002, e-mail qbmanor@pldtsun.net. Visit www.manorgardenbaguio.



The success of a company rests much on how it takes care of its people. And we at Xlibris make sure that every person who becomes part of our team gets what s/he deserves. On top of working with international authors, designing and editing published books, you're also well-compensated for doing what you love. Here that's the Xemplary Xlibris way of working. Come on and find it out for yourself. For more information about what we do, visit www.xlibris.com. For career opportunities, visit www.xlibris.ph/jobs.

Xlibris

Keep gifts safe during shipment

IF YOU ARE SHIPPING GIFTS for friends and relatives, remember to give them proper care and package so they arrive in good condition at the right time.

Joel Mañalac, esprix manager of TNT Express, stresses the importance of planning and using the right packing material. To follow the following tips:

1. Wrap and cushion breakable items like porcelain, mugs, glass, bottles in thickly soft, bubble wrap, old newspaper or manila paper about four to six layers will suffice.

2. Bigger items like paintings, glass panels and furniture should have an inner cushioning material like fiberboard or bubble wrap to prevent scratches and dents.

3. Breakable items should be placed snugly inside a fiberboard or wooden box, by adding cushioning material at the base, the first sides, in between items and on the top.

4. Ensure that breakable items do not move around.

5. Write "Fragile" and/or "Handle with Care" outside the package.

6. Indicate with an arrow which side is up, if the package contents liquid.

7. Put bigger items inside a wooden or plastic crate for increased protection during shipment.

8. Remove old labels, especially addresses, to avoid confusion.

9. Make sure to put a return address in case the gift is lost-sent.

If you don't have the time to package your gift properly, bring it to a moving company. But first check shipping cost or rates, requirements, customs rules and regulations, and travel time, especially if the package is to be sent abroad.

TNT Express offers useful information at www.tntexpress.com.ph/gift.html. Click on "express service" and go to the shipping information section.

Hassle-free shopping

CITIBANK PLATINUM AND Gold credit card holders can enjoy hassle-free Christmas shopping with 24/7 gift delivery and personal-shopper services.

Platinum and Gold cardholders have issued the check access to Citibank's Premium Concierge Service hotline, 6078888, to avail of services.

Through Premium Concierge Service's Personal Shopper Service, card holders can get help in finding a specific luxury fashion or gift item. It will check on the cost of the item and where it is available.

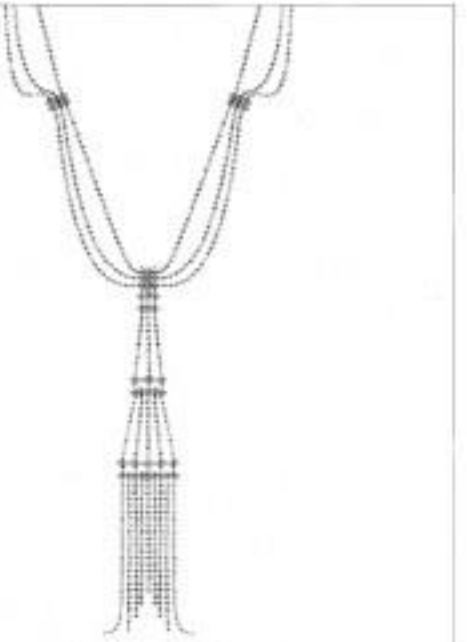
Delivery can be made through Premium Concierge Service's Gift Delivery Service.

Cardholders can also avail of the Personal Shopper and Gift Delivery Service to locate and shop for items overseas. The concierge service executive will give advice on the availability of the item, how it will be packaged, as well as what tax and shipment regulations apply.

Citibank's Premium Concierge Service is free of charge. Cardholders only pay for their purchases and taxes, if required.

The service also provides 24/7 assistance for travel and entertainment services such as referral and reservation, encashment, and emergency hotline anywhere in the world. Log on to www.citibank.com.ph.

Platinum and Gold cardholders can also get discounts and benefits in over 1,000 establishments in the Philippines, and in more than 14,000 establishments all over the world through the Citibank World Privileges program.



Rustan's
MAKATI · SHANGRI-LA PLAZA

BPI EXPRESS CREDIT
Ayala MUSEUM
nwa
Hotel Supreme
THE PENINSULA MANILA
InterContinental
CROWNE PLAZA
DISCOVERY
Holiday Inn
COUNTRY SUITES
Lifestyle privileges come as Gold
BPI Gold Mastercard gives exclusive discounts and privileges in the finest hotels, resorts, and travel partners.
BPI
We'll take you farther

Christmas concert on Dec. 16

THE ANNUAL "CHRISTMAS concert at the Pen" will be held 5 p.m., Dec. 16, at the lobby of the Peninsula Manila.

The concert features the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra.

This year, the event will also showcase the ceremonial makeover of the Peninsula lobby. Concert sponsors are The Peninsula Manila, Iconex Specialists, Inc. and Metro Factory, and in cooperation with the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Philippine Daily Inquirer, The Philippine Star, Asian Enterprise, E.C. Paulino Construction Co., Inc., Pangasiga Block Builders, Inc. and RS Wood Industries, Inc. Call 8870886.

THE PHILIPPINE Philharmonic Orchestra (left) holds a concert at the Peninsula Manila lobby.

Sunday LIFE

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

Karel Marquez headlines 'High School Musical'

Ateneo's Blue Repertory is mounting the stage adaptation of the hit Disney movie in February next year

By Gino Cuib

THE STAGE musical version of the hit Disney Channel movie "High School Musical" is hitting Manila early next year, with Ateneo de Manila's Blue Repertory having bagged the rights to recast the blockbuster musical. TV host and singer Karel Marquez stars as Gabriella Montez.

Shurley, representative (who?) to win in New York last September to secure the rights from Music Theater International, the official licensing agency of Disney Theatricals. The results run, to be discussed by Chad Arnaezochigo, is said to be the first officially licensed production of "High School Musical" in Asia, and for it, Disney has chosen a campus theater group that's become known for harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of [illegible] people for musical theater.

Shurley has previously staged musicals such as "Rent," "Cabaret," "Chicago," "Urge for the Flowers," "Bye Bye Birdie," "The Wiz," and Stephen Sondheim's "Merrily We Roll Along," the last production Shurley licensed by Music Theater International.

The recent auditions for "High School Musical," held at Ateneo's Gonzaga Fine Arts Building, drew some 270 hopefuls, with about 40 making it to Shurley's call list. Those who auditioned weren't all from Ateneo (Shurley is not exclusive to Ateneo students).

"It was a huge cross-section of young people, and not just from the exclusive schools," says Arnaezochigo.

"There were undoubtedly State [illegible] and elite students from PEP [illegible] round School, St. Paul's..."

Marquez, who already with SU Concepcion in Ateneo Performing Theater and "Rent" in 2005, lined up like the rest to audition for a part in the musical.

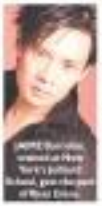
She showed up, told her story in the [illegible] and sang [illegible] "Rent" in 2005, lined up like the rest to audition for a part in the musical.

She showed up, told her story in the [illegible] and sang [illegible]

Karel Marquez headlines 'High School Musical'

SHARE Alonzo, son of theater champion Chinggay Alonzo, will play 'Troy Bolton.'

YEH Miranda will play Sharpay Evans.



ANDRE Garcellano, nephew of Mayor Lito Atienza, gets the part of Ryan Evans.

From page D1

Amopoochaga, who also directed Singer/Songwriter Karel Marquez's "Freedom" last year.

Marquez readied up getting the plum role at Gabriella Montez (played by Vanessa Anne Hudgens in the movie) opposite Mark Alonzo as Troy Bolton (Zac Efron in the film).

Mark is the son of theater champion Chinggay Alonzo and the younger brother of actor-dancer Gadiem Alonzo, who is currently a performer in Hong Kong Disneyland. A senior Ateneo student, "he is a very good dancer, he sings well, he looks the part and he does play basketball," says Amopoochaga.

In "High School Musical," Troy is the captain of his school's basketball team who is challenged to explore his love for singing when he meets the smart and resourceful Gabriella Montez. Together, they and others in their school's musical presentation, even as their respective commitments to sports and studies pull them in other directions.

"It's a story about a group of teenagers and how they deal with first love, peer pressure, going for their dreams, the value of friends and family, their studies and other activities," says Jio. "It can be enjoyed not just by students, but by the entire family and people of all ages as well."

Top-selling album

The soundtrack of "High School Musical" has become a top-selling album worldwide, with songs like "Start of Something New," "We're All In This Together," and the mega-hit "Breaking Free" topping endless airplay and a permanent place in countless listeners' iPods.

Playing the part of Sharpay and Ryan Evans, the stars-brother team who lambs it out with Gabriella and Troy for the lead parts in the school musical, are Yeh Miranda and Andre Garcellano (Ashley Tisdale and James Godfrey in the movie).

Miranda is a UP student who previously appeared in Rhodora's "Sweet Charity," while Garcellano is an actor who trained at De La Salle School in Taft "dark and is currently at, currently in one of four fields in Repertory Philippines' "The Sound of Music."

The sheer number of people who showed up for the auditions highlights the phenomenal popularity of "High School Musical" among the young, thanks to its winning elements: good-looking stars, catchy music, a story that many of their can relate to, and that hint of fun, excitement and energy running through the film.

The stage version will feature all the songs..."rearranged beautifully for choral harmony and pop theatre," says Amopoochaga—and will retain the schoolmates, you-did-what-behind-by-so many of the movie.

The three-month rehearsal period for the cast began this month, with five scheduled performances on Feb. 23-25, 2007 (Friday and Saturday 8 p.m. shows, Saturday and Sunday 2 p.m. shows, and Sunday 10 a.m. show) at the Meralco Theatre.

Choreographer is Dan Cabrera, one of the resident choreographers at ASK-CIBO's "Pinoy Dream Academy." Bambitana alumnus Miss Rivera is musical director, Mio Infante ("Jessie," "Footloose") is set designer, and Ishmael Bojica is lighting designer.

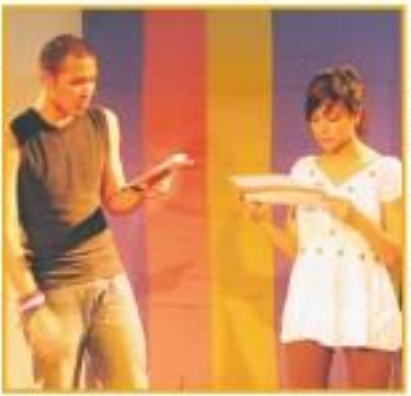
As for the actors, "we were looking for those who had that bright energy, a spunk and youthfulness that would spill out of the show," says Amopoochaga.

In Marquez, Alonzo and 45 other fresh talents, Rhodora is betting it has found its ideal "High School Musical" cast.

Tickets for "High School Musical" will go on sale in January 2007 at all Tickets World outlets. Call Ticket: (02) 7251594 or (02) 09178888974.

E-mail: gcalo@inquirer.com.ph; visit www.gelocalo.com

SOME 250 hopefuls trooped in the auditions for "High School Musical," held in Ateneo's Blesa-ago Fine Arts Building.



KAREL Marquez and Shuris Abaya during the auditions

David's vision of an interconnected universe

DAVID tries to peel off masks, dig deep, and go beneath the surface.

IN THE MUSIC "DE DECIDES OF HUMANITY," it was suggested that if you found the right five people, you would, sooner or later, meet anybody you ever whether it was George W Bush or George Clooney.

Aileen Wang-David, in a way explores this theory in her first solo exhibition of paintings, sculptures and installations.

The collection of portraits reveals the inter-connectedness of everyone and everything, breaking through the many degrees of separation to reveal the oneness of the universe.

"Portraits: The Interconnectedness of Everyone and Everything" is ongoing at Art Space, 4/F Megastall Building A, Mandaluyong City until Dec. 31.

With her compelling cast of characters, all drawn from real life, David aims to peel off masks, dig deep, and go beneath the surface.

She tries to tear apart differences to reveal the oneness that binds all humanity. Her subjects are relatives and friends, household staff, store strangers, whose seemingly ordinary lives reveal nuances that David's keen eye, sharp mind, sensitive soul and patient hand sought to capture on canvas, in clay or stone or metal, and the other media she used. Characters seemingly separated by fate and fortune were linked through her artist's deft hands.

BRONZE portrait

Originally from Hong Kong, David began her artistic training at the Chelsea School of Art in London. As a visual artist, she was more recently by noted Filipino social-realist painter Botong Francisco.

"Through her debut show, David strives to hone the underlying emotions, characters and struggles in everyday life in the Philippines where, according to her, the basic values of love, camaraderie, caring and thoughtfulness are predominant.

"Portraits: The Interconnectedness of Everyone and Everything," is ongoing until Dec. 15 at Art Space, 4/F Megastall Building A, Mandaluyong City.

"SELF-PORTRAIT"

PORTRAIT consists

THE ARTIST tries to reveal the numerous binding humanity.

Paskong Pinoy for a cause

CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS and lend a hand by dining at any Cabalen restaurant this December. The eat-all-you-can, eat-all-you-want restaurant is now on its 10th year of raising funds for less-privileged children.

Called Cabalen Para sa Kabataan, the project sets aside a percentage of every customer that Cabalen generates for the entire month of December for less-privileged children.

For the past nine years, Cabalen has used the money earned during the year's monthlong fund drive to provide for the needs of poor preschool kids from public schools and day-care children in Pampanga, Malabon and Pasig City. This year, Cabalen donated a library for the students of Teodora Alonzo Elementary School in Project 6, QC.

Cabalen offers diners a buffet laid out with specialties such as Beef Bistecca, Inasbasla, Paella, Bistecca, Bellevang Banyaw, Asadong Dila, Kaldereang Baka, Fish Flakes with Bhapa, Bam-I or Pancit Guisado, Chicken Embutido, Buro-Pandan Salad, Hot Native Chocolate and Bico.

Other spectacle dishes served year-round include Kare-kare, Bulig and Bulalo with Mami.

Cabalen Restaurants are located at 67 West Ave., QC, 2/L, SM City North Edsa, QC, 4/L, Bldg. B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong, 2/L, Robinsons Place Ermita, Manila, Glorietta 5, Makati City, G/L, Robinsons Starmalls, San Fernando, Pampanga, Brickroad Area, Fts. Lucia East Grand Mall, Calamba, Laguna, 3/L, Cleth Avenue, Festival Mall, Alabang, and the newly opened Cabalen at SM City Clark, Pampanga. Call 911.11161, or for ordering, 421.9128 or 911.9112.

ASADONG DILA

BUFFET of Kapampangan favorites

FISH Fillet in Mayonnaise

BICO

Fastfood chain building 6 more day-care centers

MCDONALD'S CHARITIES CELEBRATED World Children's Day with the ground-breaking for six Bahay Buklit day-care centers.

A joint project of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), local governments, and McDonald's Charities, the centers are in the cities of Dasmariñas, Bataan, Cebu, San Pablo and Sta. Cruz, Laguna; and Tanauan, Batangas.

The day-care centers is dispensed as our give primary education to children under 6 years old.

In Bahay Buklit, children play and learn in a safe and stimulating place.

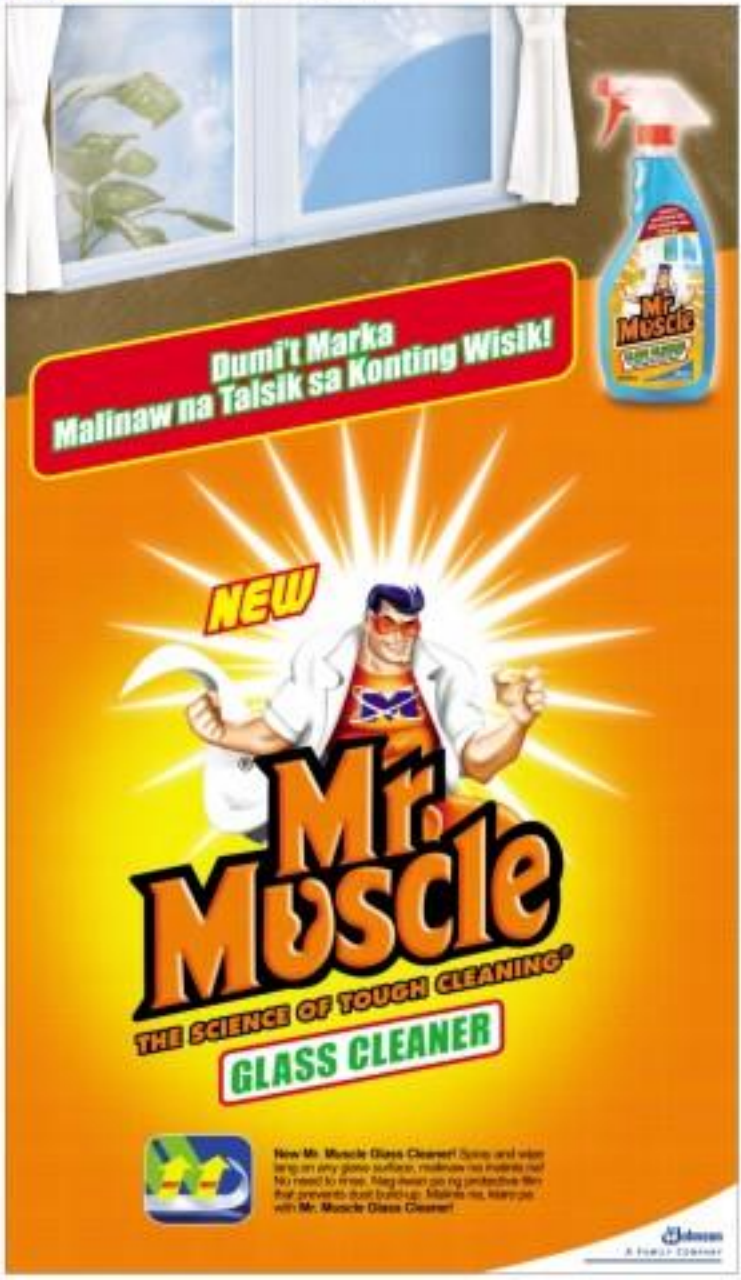
At present, there are nine Bahay Buklit centers in the cities of Makati, Quezon, Mandaluyong, Manila, Pasay and Iloilo; Tarlac, Biñan, and Batangas.

McDonald's Charities aims to build 100 Bahay Buklit day-care centers nationwide.

McDonald's founder George Yang has also handed in the Department of Education money donated by McDonald employees, as their contribution to World Children's Day.

Customers who order a Happy Meal combo at McDonald's Charities share 50 centavos of every meal sold goes to charity.

McDonald's is also distributing "Share Your Change" canisters to its over 260 outlets to raise funds for its child-oriented programs.



Cheers to a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year

In this season of joy, we look back and thank those who made our successes possible.
With everybody's support, we expanded further in Cebu and in Alabang.
The constant drive of the eTelecare community to excellence made us a much-sought-after employer
with a very high 98% employee satisfaction rating.
Indeed, eTelecare is a company of truly satisfied employees.

We thank our clients for entrusting us with their business.
We appreciate the effort of our university partners and business colleagues
for enabling us to perform our commitment to our customers.
Our gratitude to all our employees for being dedicated team players
for providing our customers with the excellent service that eTelecare is known for.

Together, we celebrate the many reasons why eTelecare shines. And, in the new year,
we look forward to becoming even bigger, brighter and better...with you.

Come and join the eTelecare team

etelecare GLOBAL SOLUTIONS

The world's most awarded call center company

Manila 580-6530 • Cebu (032) 411-9030 • www.etelecare.com

manila.recruiting@etelecare.com • alabang.recruiting@etelecare.com • ceburecruiting@etelecare.com

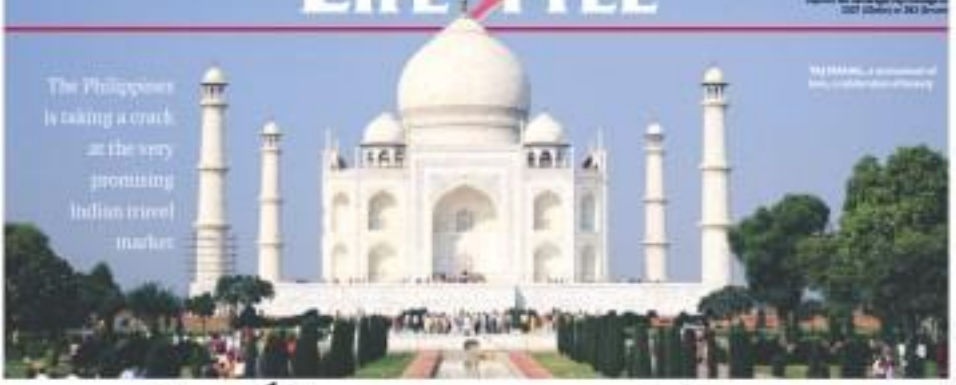
LIBIS
2/F Cyber One Bldg.
Eastwood City,
Libis Quezon City

MAKATI
12/F PBCom Tower
6795 Ayala Ave.,
Makati City

ALABANG
G/F Plaz@ A Bldg
Northgate Cyberzone
Alabang, Muntinlupa City

CEBU
6/F PIPC Bldg
Asiatown IT Park
Lahug, Cebu City

Sunday LIFESTYLE



It's an Indian summer for Philippine tourism

Text and photos by Anna A. Jamboro

THE MYSTICAL CHARM AND the promise of a spiritual retreat may have long seduced visitors to walk the storied graves of India, but there is no big mystery to the aggressive campaign of the Philippine Department of Tourism to lure into the country the Indian tourism market. The DOT is simply going after the big fish—and it is a chunk worth every single bite.

As the second most populated country in the world, India has about seven to eight million outbound tourists each year, traveling for leisure across the globe for 10-16 days and each spending an average of $1,200 on food and shopping alone.

Indians, in fact, are among the world's top tourist spenders. This is according to Sunjoy Jaya, India representative for the Philippine Tourism Marketing Office in New Delhi.

While the country does have the traditional tourists who visit to relax and enjoy the scenery, they spending rather conservatively. It is the Indian market that delights in experiencing a holiday off from work—from savoring the local nightlife to shopping on your bus to lapping up on good bargains for souvenirs and, well, personal shopping.

"Indians are very much like Filipinos in that aspect; we love to shop," said Poonam Mukhija of Rose Travel Marketing India Pvt. Ltd., the travel company Jeet runs.

Tourism Secretary Joseph "Joey" Durano said it clear: The facilities in Metro Manila and Cebu City make an ideal match in that Indian travelers' preference for entertainment, gaming and shopping.

"Big travel destinations for Indians in Asia

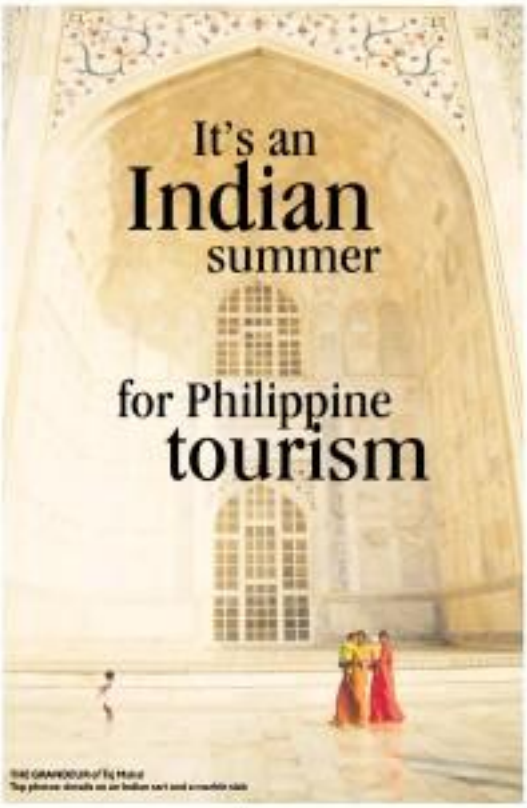
IT'S AN INDIAN E2

It's an Indian summer for Philippine tourism

THE JAMA Masjid, India's largest mosque, has 11 arched entrances.

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY. This man finds comfort in prayer inside a temple in Old Delhi.

TOURISM Secretary Joseph "Joe" Durano enjoys the view of the Taj Mahal. "We want the Philippines to be the alternative destination for Indian tourists."



THE GRANDEUR of Taj Mahal
Top photos: details on an Indian sari and a marble slab

THE RASHTRAPATI Bhavan (Presidential Palace) in New Delhi

ENTRANCE to the Taj Mahal

COLONIAL architecture of government buildings across the Presidential Palace

THE TAJ Mahal's main spire—mama of the room and finial point give a distant shape similar to the Hindu symbols of Shiva.

SHOES are not allowed inside the complex. This woman takes a breather outdoors.

CAMELS roam the streets of India, along with cows and elephants, in perfect harmony with the daily traffic.

Front page ©

include Singapore and Malaysia, with each country receiving an annual average of 600,000 Indian tourists. The Philippines has populace of 80,000 permanent Indian residents, but as of September this year the country only received just over 15,000 Indian tourists. The figure may be up by 6.7 percent from the same period last year, but Durano hopes to duplicate DOT's success in China whose outbound tourism industry in the country saw a staggering 168 percent after only a year of campaign.

"I believe we have a lot to offer to Indians," Durano said.

"So think some-not? Economic. Indian rupees will definitely go a long way in the Philippines compared with other expensive destinations in Asia, enough to compensate for the long travel time Indians will have to go through since hours overall, not including a layover in Singapore) coming to the country.

Besides, Joey said, Indian travelers generally didn't just visit one country when on vacation. It made perfect sense then, he added, to jump on straight to the Philippines after touring, say, Singapore or Malaysia. Travel wise it would be less stressful, and there would be more memories of interesting experiences to take home with them, he said.

"There are bars, beaches and shopping arcades in Malaysia and Singapore, so why go all the way to the Philippines? Aside from the fact that it is somewhat an undiscovered territory for many Indians, it is cheaper. Not that Indian tourists are seriously doing research, but they do get so much more out of their money by choosing the Philippines," Hidalgo said.

Promotional activities from partner airline Singapore Airlines, such as new packages to the Philippines, were already underway, said Durano. During his brief official trip—and his first—to India recently, Durano also sealed a successful partnership with Cathay Pacific Airways, Malaysian Airlines and Air Asia.

DOT's partnership with Jeet and the Boss Travel agencies is by no less an invaluable move. Jeet is also the founder of Durga Das Publications Pvt. Ltd., a specialized publishing company in travel and tourism materials, including Incredible India. Durano said Jeet's extensive marketing network and thorough understanding of the Indian tourism industry would help boost the tourism market here.

Jeet, who recently worked with DOT to host 11 Indian travel agents on a familiarization tour to Manila, Cebu and Bohol—all first-time visitors—said a buzz of excitement filtered the air upon the agents' return to India. Prior to that, he said, nobody in India had ever talked about the Philippines as a tourist destination.

"They couldn't believe such a beautiful and very affordable country existed," Jeet said. "Many Indians do not know what to do and see in the Philippines. Through the familiarization tour our agents learned that shopping is excellent, hotels and resorts are well-priced, beaches are beautiful, music and nightlife is wonderful."

The trip yielded more than the travel agents to get to work that over 150 Indian journalists showed up at the DOT press conference. The largest turnout for a tourism promotion in his 30-year experience, said Jeet, who expected at most only 70 journalists.

Entertainment, gaming and shopping might be a draw now for Indian tourists, but Durano also impressed the country's many pristine beaches and scuba-diving destinations as excellent topics from city life.

"The Philippines offers a valuable proposition that enriches and enhances the travel values. Scuba diving is on the Philippines what [wine-tasting] is to skiing or wine. Nepal is no mountain climbing. We have the highest marine diversity in the world, a fact supported by a UN study," Durano said.

Durano said the Philippines needed to maximize the use of Manila's capacity of 38,000 rooms—which is mostly three-to six-star hotels. He said DOT was also tapping India's dealer conferences that give away international vacation packages as incentives to its employees. Honda company in India alone gives away an average of 3,000 trips to its employees annually.

Luring in five million tourists to the Philippines by 2010 is Durano's support for President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point economic agenda.

E-mail the author at ajimbron@inquirer.com.ph

MASJID-I-JAHAN Numa, or Jama Masjid, "the mosque commanding a view of the world"

LURE of the snake charmer

RELIGIOUS practice requires men to wash their hands and heads before entering the house of prayer.

THIS Hindu temple in New Delhi's site home to a quaint shopping mall.

WOOD concrete picnic tables are scattered all over the La Mesa park for dining.

New picnic grounds at La Mesa watershed

METRO MANILA RESIDENTS can still find refuge from city pollution and noise in one of Quezon City's jewels, the La Mesa Watershed Forest and Ecological Park located in Fairview.

Families visiting the La Mesa Watershed Forest and Ecology Park will now experience the newly landscaped Lopez Picnic grounds. The Lopez family's support has resulted in polished pathways, improved concrete picnic tables and benches and lush landscapes, all enhancing the natural beauty of the picnic grounds.

Through the rehabilitation of the La Mesa picnic grounds, the family, with the help of MSE-CON Foundation's Barangay Kalikasan, hopes to promote the protection of La Mesa Watershed and encourage the importance of environment to the city.

The MSE-CON Foundation has been at the forefront of helping the La Mesa Watershed survive. Starting with its reforestation campaign in 1999, Ramon Kalikasan has successfully reforested 92 percent of its initial commitment of 1,500 hectares to be rehabilitated in La Mesa.

Visit www.ramonkalikasan.com and www.lamesaeqpark.com.

THE PARK now has polished roads.

TRAVELBRIEFS

Special holiday package

Hyatt Regency Manila offers a special holiday package for the whole family until Dec. 31.

The package includes Deluxe room accommodation for two adults and two children, buffet breakfast at Cafe Ala Carte for two adults and two children, welcome drink at the Centra Bar, Christmas cookies upon check in, free use of the swimming pool, and free access to the Fitness Gym.

Hyatt Regency Manila also gives parents discounts for their to the Spa on Waiting Kids and entrance tickets for two to Star City. The package is available for only P4,000 net. Late check out until 2 p.m. is subject to availability. Call 832-1234 local 8006-09.

Fun-filled package

Holiday Inn Galleria Manila in Ortigas has a Fun-tastic Holiday Room Package for The whole family until Jan. 14. For P5,888++ per night, you can have a two-night minimum stay in a deluxe room with complimentary breakfast for two adults and two children daily.

The Fun-tastic package includes a 15 percent discount at Holiday Inn's newest restaurant fab for fresh or dinner. Kids 7 years old and younger eat for free when they dine with their parents.

Sorbet Spa offers a 15 percent discount on selected services.

The first 100 to avail of the package get a P1000 Gift Certificate for Toys R Us at the Robinsons Galleria Mall. Call 6207111 or e-mail reservations@hiergroup.com.

Europe at a bargain

Experience Christmas in Vienna and other European destinations through Austrian Airlines.

Travelers can explore Austria's capital city and tour Swiss cities or of opt to be at USD1,540+ for 12 days.

With American Express Adventure International Tours Inc. (AMEX/ATI), the airline presents the Eastern European Travel Package for $1,050++ that covers Vienna, Prague and Budapest. Travelers can take the European East Rail Pass and tour ten additional destinations in Poland and Slovakia. Austrian Airlines, with Star Alliance partner Asiana Airlines, can take travelers around the world at a discounted rate of only $1,015++ in Economy. The packages and promos are available until April 30, 2007.

Call Austrian Airlines at 8830 067 or 8482 4615 or 891 4888.

Luxury holiday package

Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila offers until Jan. 14 the Christmas Luxury Package for only P3,980++ per night. The package includes accommodation in a deluxe room, evening night soup at lunch/dinner and buffet breakfast for two at the Seven Corners restaurant. The room package includes a 10 percent discount for lunch or dinner at Seven Corners.

Guests get a complimentary 15-minute foot reflexology or back massage in the privacy of their rooms. The Ilunga Spa offers a 15-percent discount for extended services.

The first 100 guest of the offer will receive a special "unwind gift pack" from Ilunga Spa that includes peppermint scented hand and body lotion, washand antibacterial hand spray. Lucky clients will also get an A-listed Star to find in a Blue Fragrance card with their room key. Rates will entitle them to a 20 percent discount.

Those checking in on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24) will get a fragrance combo from Prestige Brands Toilet or Regal Cologne. Call 8267222 or e-mail mnlsp@hotelshiergroup.com.

Face the fact. You need to know more about your bones to take care of them the best way possible.

Studies show that Filipinos only get 57% of their daily calcium requirements. Bad news for your bones. That's because calcium is the key component of bones that help to form and maintain their strong structure. Speaking of bone formation, did you know that as human beings age, bones undergo a constant process of breaking down and rebuilding? This process is called remodeling.

A bone's life

Throughout physical maturity, bone remodeling varies depending on age, gender and hormonal status.

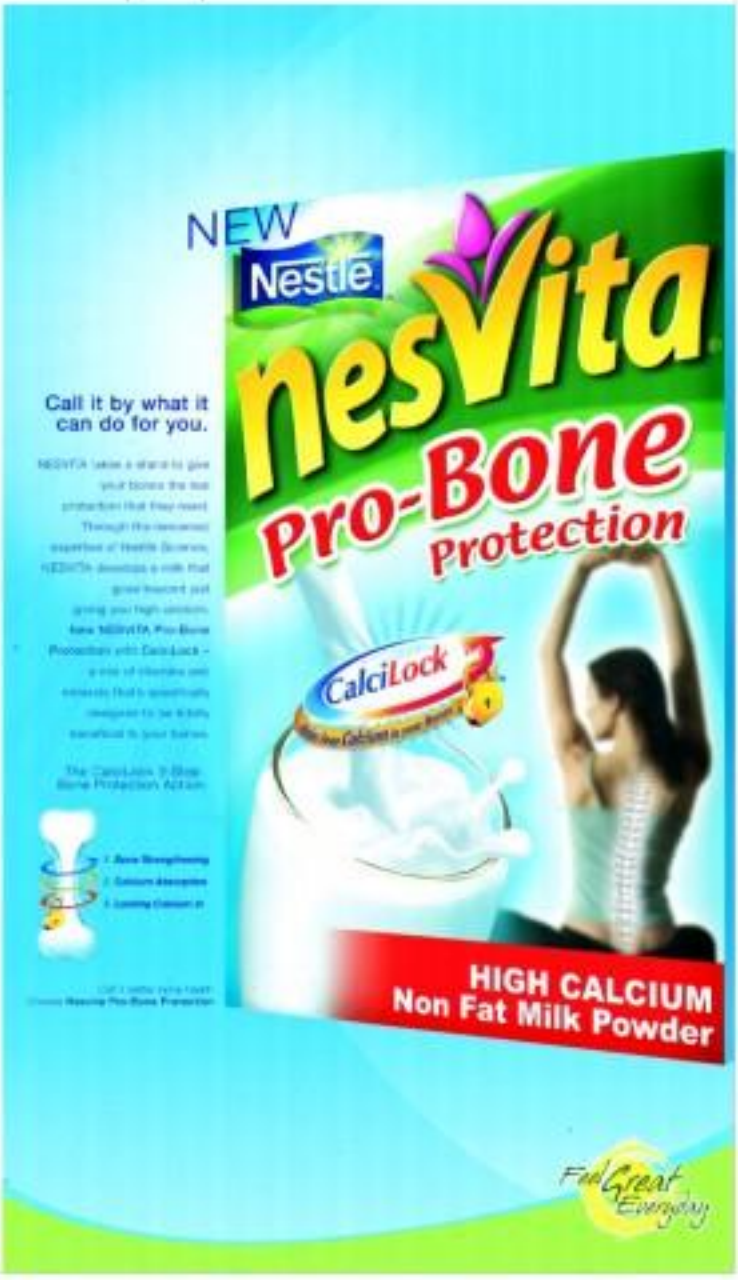
- The building of bone mass is most critical during the childhood and adolescent years. At this stage, bone formation usually takes place more than bone breakdown.
- As we progress to adulthood, bones are at an equilibrium, meaning bone mass is at its peak. At this point, bone formation and bone breakdown rates are almost the same. As such, it is important that the level of bone formation should balance that of bone breakdown to avoid bone mass depletion.
- Then moving on to the mature years (45 years old and up), slow bone loss is experienced.

Bones lose the ability to absorb calcium after 25 years of age. No amount of calcium can restore lost bone mass.

Live healthy with healthy-living bones

As with any other organ in the body, bones need to be nourished. Exercising regularly strengthens not just the muscles but the bones as well, so start walking more and lift those stairs when you can! Think physical activity might be bone breaking? Think again. On the contrary, choosing to lead a sedentary and inactive lifestyle can lead to bone loss. Remember, when you don't use it, you lose it! When standing, sitting and walking, think 'up'. Proper body posture makes bones stronger. Also, take the time to visit your doctor and have your bone health checked. While you're at it, seek advice on proper exercise and diet. Most likely, he'll tell you to eat foods that are rich in calcium, vitamin D and minerals. Take his advice. And of course, to make sure your bones stay fit and strong, drink a glass or two of

NESVITA Pro-Bone Protection with **CalciLock** everyday.



LIFESTYLE

To live and prosper in LA

Hordes of immigrants are still taking their chances on an American city now far different from what it once was

Text and photos by Alex T. Vergara

LOS ANGELES MAY HAVE grown exponentially both in land area and population through the decades, but the core of the city's history remains relatively intact to this day.

Situated in a quiet corner of downtown, a stone's throw away from city hall, El Pueblo de Los Angeles has been a silent witness to 130 changing horizons, which began sometime in 1777. As Spain's influence in Mexico began to wane, it searched for new territories in the north.

Eleven families of mixed ancestries from the distant town of Alamos in Sonora (now part of Mexico) were recruited by the Spanish colonial government to settle in a newly established pueblo in what California (present-day Southern California) named after the Spanish Sefiora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula.

Interestingly, the Pinoy presence in LA dates back to its earliest years when a team of Filipino-descent named Antonio Miranda Rodriguez and his family almost made it as one of LA's original settlers.

Pilipino Mestizo and the other pobladores were halfway through the journey he decided to stay behind with his daughters who had become ill with smallpox. That was the last LA history heard of Miranda, but not of Filipinos, who continue to migrate to the city today in droves.

Complex history

Indeed, one can't even begin to attempt to tell snippets of the "LA Story" without backtracking a little bit. If anything, such a complex history is surprising for a place that wasn't even accorded city status until 1850.

LA is one huge melting pot today (perhaps, even more diverse than New York City!), but as recently as the 1940s the city was dubbed as America's "white spot" for its overwhelmingly Caucasian population, the result mainly of decades of internal migration.

Disillusioned by previous policies, regulations, explanation and corruption (sounds vaguely familiar?) that held sway in older, more established cities in the East Coast and the Midwest, succeeding generations of Americans—what would later be called White Anglo-Saxon Protestants—asserting a fresh start perceptibly relocated to LA during the turn of the last century.

"America, to a large extent, was built upon such a system," said Dr. Fernando Guerra, director for the Study of Los Angeles at the Loyola Marymount University. "Much as we like to complain today about other countries doing that, we built our [cities] states using the old, corrupt political system."

Many Americans, who turned their backs from such practices, decided to build a whole new system when they moved to LA. It marked the start of the "progressive era," a model later followed by much newer western cities like Las Vegas, San Diego and Phoenix (more on this system and its present-day ramifications on LA next time).

"It was very much about how do you professionally administer a municipality," said Guerra. "How do you professionally administer politics? How do you take out the politics from politics?"

LA's population continued to swell soon after the war, when GIs returning from combat

BPI EXPRESS CREDIT

Give triple happiness with triple spending power.

BPI We'll take you further.

0% S.I.P.

A gem of a home in the heart of Manila.

Celadon Residences

Community Innovations

Call: (632) 796-0888

FROM 17 percent in 1980, Latinos now make up 37 percent of LA's population. Mexican and Mexican-inspired products began but from restaurants to it's Latin

FORTY years after the city started to become a major source of America's political and economic power, LA today is once again at a crossroads.

To live and prosper in LA

THIS historic place was the site of a recent pro-immigration rally organized and participated in by LA's burgeoning Latino population.

From page F1

states in the Pacific passed through Southern California on their way home to various points in the United States. Many were fascinated by the city and its mild, sunny climate that they decided to pack their bags and move to LA with their families.

Such a development paved the way for the rise of a number of manufacturing industries which relocated overseas years later in labor costs in the US became too exorbitant, particularly in aerospace. Since there were lots of jobs to be had, one didn't have to be a degree holder back then to earn a decent living in LA.

Prosperous period

This period of prosperity, which raised the ranks of the "established" middle class in LA by sixty, was so common unimpeded up to the late 1960s. Since coming homes was within everybody's reach, LA started sagging pockets of homeowners was virtually unheard of back then.

Small wonder, said Guerra, that many foreigners in the city still viewed the American Dream lifestyle as the epitome of the American dream. Hell, to a certain degree it was: 50 years ago.

"We see it happening today in China and in certain areas in the Middle East," he added. "In many senses a created class within a period of five to 10 years may see economically vibrant cities where everybody is employed."

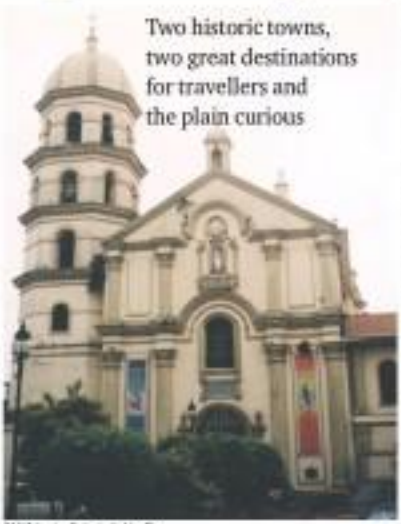
A similar development happened in LA, where a great deal of immigrant political power and economic might came from, in the 1960s. But unlike certain areas today, LA prepared itself for its coming-out party by building the necessary infrastructure like airports, seaports and freeways long before the boom took place.

Meanwhile, the crossing-brushed new cosmographic drift as the number of immovables, parts-

THE PICO House, which is now a museum of LA's history, was once the home of Miss California's fat governor before it was turned into a hotel.

THE AUTHOR (in a sweatjacket by Frederick Parrilla) and fellow journalists, Tito Pardon, Kazuyo Makada and Tonyo Wai display their "Caribbeans of Philippines" during a roaming call to LA Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

Lipa and Pagsanjan in one loop



SAN Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City

Two historic towns, two great destinations for travellers and the plain curious

Text and photos by Ananda Mia Guerrero
Contributor

A CATASTROPHIC ERUPTION OF Mt Taal in 1754 brought down upon Tagaytay's crests, and changed the map of Batangas at the time.

As fields destroyed by lava and flood waters, Lipa was considered on its present location, where the Augustinian friars encouraged the harvesting of rice and coffee that were pump-primed the economy.

Lipa flourished. But in the 20th century, the days of glory of trade and wares, ended with World War II, when the town became a battleground between American and Japanese forces.

Apolo Benevento (seniors (name) Historial Affair for Lipa) to this town), in a 1983 interview in Celebrity magazine, recalled both the cruelty of the Japanese, as well as the indiscriminate looting by the Americans. "They bombed, they razed the town completely. At the end of the war, I stood on the main avenue and could see as far as the palengke—talagang flattened."

Today, only a few structural homes, well-preserved or decaying, remain in the old district of the city near the cathedral. There are the balay na bato, gray houses of stone and wood, with ornate designs.

There the Bautista residence and Casa Segunda, proudly proclaiming the year it was constructed: 1880. Adjacent is the Lim Antiphat Ancestral House, which bears a 1906 National Historical Institute plaque. "This is a heritage house pursuant to Grand Revolution Series."

For me, Lipa is also a shrine city. The majestic San Sebastian cathedral, with

OUTDOOR manage parlor along the Pagsanjan River

its dome and towering belfry was administered by the Augustinians from 1605 to the end of the 19th century.

The nearby shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was the scene of miracles during the late 1940s: "a shower of petals" which, when examined scientifically, were found to originate, inexplicably, from Russia.

Some Christian communities then founded the town's basic but, in time, the shrine were unofficially recognized.

Economically Lipa prospered again, becoming a modern, bustling city with many fast-attention eateries in town. Those include La Cocina de Lipa (tel. 043-756-1111), located in front of the new SM City Lipa. It has, among other features, a water-aquarium section.

"Managing director Luz Angeles-King is very environment-friendly," says assistant manager Grace Garcia Orano. A

long-time resident game of the hotel (David Cleary (person name: Frank Mc 1911, a colorful, jovial Irish-Canadi who, until recently, worked as a consul and as an executive (hollywood) executive.

He has international ties, among others Claire Danes, the actress who studied managing scientific affairs Manila a where Cleary found unfortunately, "the are ever growing," he opines.

"If hotel rooms is a hotel room," Cleary declares. "When is important to live it well. And here they were your until, mil in Perlo..."

Pagsanjan

Town-building and challenging ... ropes are the buzzwords in the locale ... tourist in Pagsanjan, Laguna, (a Cons (tel. 049-808-1720), which has also ... ing areas.

The two-ladies resort is located alo

. This market on Olvera Street, only a short distance away from City Hall, some with various Americ and, yes, Otro.

LA IGLESIA
Nuestra Señora La Reina de Los Angeles, the oldest church in LA, still stands to this day at El Pueblo.

viewed for first Latino mayor in 130 years as the personal Antonio Villaraigosa.

Stereotype

In a reversal of roles, Guatemalans have certainly become one among many minorities, albeit still a formidable one, comprising 50 per cent of the population. Thanks to Hollywood, the stereotype of the blond, blue-eyed Californian no longer.

One trait if inspired attempt to debunk such myths and see the record straight: a recognition

LATINO influence is very evident in LA, from the fusion to the bilingual signs in English and Spanish.

nd in the documentary "Los Angeles Now" by award-winning filmmaker Phillip Rodriguez.

In keeping with Angeleenos' love affair with their cars, the film advises by like a drive-by tour of LA's dynamic and constantly changing cityscape and temperature, which has increasingly become more brown than white.

For all the city's purported drowning a good number of Angeleans are the first to admit to how clueless they are about certain parts of LA and their inhabitants.

Due to the city's sheer size, various groups of Angeleans, within the confines of their respective cars, manage to keep to themselves without bothering to look at what's happening to other people "over the hedge."

La Conong admits home would raise Cincinnati, Ohio's population of 18 million and counting, by half a to shows is equivalent to the combined size of tenth major US cities as – hold your breath... Pittsburgh, Boston, Minneapolis, Saint Louis, Milwaukee, Cleveland and San Francisco.

Among the hundreds of mind-numbing scenes foreigners captivate on screen, a particular image stands out: a yellow sign warning motorists to watch out for people crossing the freeway!

In lieu of a galloping sheriff's silhouette, the sign features the outline of a man, woman and child – presumably illegals as they dash to round a near life (or sudden death?) of supposed prosperity in America.

After almost 200 years since the first immigrant families settled in the once barren hills of Southern California, descendants of those left behind in Mexico (and the Philippines) are still raising their chickens on a Los Angeles now far different from when it once was.

The author, together with journalists from China, Japan and New Zealand, recently participated in the inaugural Los Angeles Show China Visiting Journalist Fellowship.

E-mail him at evergreen@inquirer.com.ph

Lipa and Pagsanjan in one loop

From page F3

HANGMAN your balance!

the banks of the Pagsanjan River, where you see the boatmen and their passengers, clad in life vests, on their way to shooting the rapids (P665 pp).

La Cuevas de Pagsanjan has cozy cottages, resident rooms, camping areas for hire, an outdoor massage hut and other amenities common to a tourist-oriented establishment.

For corporate clients, however, the main come-on is team-building through the Hyper Course Challenges, an outdoor adventure learning workshop.

"Each course has a mounting and a rubric," explains assistant manager Bey Cabreseanos. "The objective is to improve camaraderie and foster a cohesive unit, and align this to the objectives of the company."

At its example, says Cabreseanos, "Isamil 'sink each

WDCD carvings illustrate scenes from the Bible.

challenge, a team member will drink 'Hyper Ice Bucket'" But it's like a video game, it seems unbelievable at first, but with perseverance and hard work you can have your fun."

The campsite spreads over a three-hectare forested terrain and, as you swear, you are right. The "hives" trip buddy and hit habits," and "tree based games, helmets, harness to daring the high-wire."

The four courses are Spider's Web, Low V (for Victory), Blind Man's Trail, Swinging Log Traverse, Trust Wall and Trust Fall. The high courses are High V, Multi-Line Traverse, Multi-Use Cable, Cat Walk and Burma Bridge. The ropes course consist of a Diverging Traverse, Loop Traverse and Parallel Traverse.

In Low V, two persons do a bonding act. The Blind Man's Trail requires a participant to guide a blindfolded teammate through an obstacle course, in Burma Bond, participants cross bare-one-two to another 25 feet above ground.

In Trust Fall, a team member falls backward from a five-foot ramp, into the waiting hands of his teammates. The grand finale event is usually the Trust Wall, where all the team members climb to the top of a 12-foot-high vertical wall. Once on top, the participants one-no longer help the others maintainer still scurrying to the peak.

Not part of the course but also played out in the campsite is the so-called Shirt Drill. When I was there, Amateur de Manila graduate students (including a few foreigners) were undertaking this event, amid whoops and laughter.

Two teams in different colors, wearing helmets and armored vests and wielding air guns, shoot out to interfere with rubber paint bullets. The intent is to capture the yellow flag hidden in the camp of the "enemy."

The game has warlike, military overtones, but, as the officers-in-charge pointed out, the objective is just to learn strategy and discipline.

Getz

Hyundai Getz is an attitude on the road with its amazing Space Wizard feature, flare-chic design, and responsive performance. Get on the coolest hot hatch in town at an incredibly affordable price. Available in 1.1 MT, 1.4 MT/AT and 1.5 CRDi MT.

HYUNDAI

Drive your way

Getz more attitude

HYUNDAI www.myhyundai.com.ph

Genuine Parts

3 years unlimited kilometer warranty

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR IN PHILIPPINES:
HYUNDAI ASIA RESOURCES, INC.

HYUNDAI'S PRO NEGOSYO IN GO NEGOSYO

From a vision of making Hyundai's innovations for humanity available to the Filipino market, Hyundai Asia Resources, Inc. (HARI) further engages itself in serving the people by being an active part in the development of the community with its Pro Negosyo Movement. In executing this movement, HARI involves itself in another dignified activity as it participates in the Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship's Go Negosyo Fiesta sa Opisina at Bahayan, a three-day affair on December 13 to 15.

Launched in October, HARI's Pro Negosyo Movement denotes its standpoint to support the entrepreneurs, particularly those in the Small to Medium Enterprises, who greatly contribute to pushing the country's economy forward. HARI is one with the government in believing that by helping these entrepreneurs who comprise the base of the economy's economy, a significant drive towards development can be achieved. Drawing mutual inspiration with this movement is Hyundai's new Atoz 1993 series that features the lively favorite van and Hyundai's flag carrier in the Philippines in a coupe and 5-seater type to cater to the specific needs of the entrepreneurs. Also, with the Pro Negosyo Movement, HARI initiates and participates in different activities that hold up the interests of the entrepreneurs.

The Philippine Center for Entrepreneurship's Go Negosyo for OFWs and Bahayan is one of the activities where HARI takes active participation as part of its Pro Negosyo Movement. The three-day affair will be held at Market! Market!, Fort Bonifacio Taguig. Different activities are in store for the OFWs and the bahayan are such as concerts, raffles, and entertainment shows. The highlight of the event are the series of forums which will offer many business opportunities for the OFWs.

An exhibit of different business ideas will also be held at the Go Negosyo event. In this, HARI will display the Atoz 1993, which conceives as the ideal partner of the entrepreneur in his different business activities particularly in the transportation aspect.

Other activities that Hyundai initiated with the Pro Negosyo Movement are the business forums which were held in different Hyundai dealers. The business forums aimed to educate the entrepreneurs on how to take their business to the next level, with the expertise of its speakers, Entrepreneur Guru Andy Ferreols. Further, HARI also donated one unit of the Starex PRO to Ground Kalinga in support of its Pangkabuhayan projects.

With these, HARI hopes to make a contribution in helping improve the quality of lives of the people, and ultimately, of the economy. Living out their corporate mantra, Innovations for Humanity, does not stop with delivering quality automobiles and services to the people, but also extends to their corporate social responsibility to make a difference in the lives of the people.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Segue to Christmas

NO NEED TO WAIT FOR THE other Christmas sale! The Fall-Winter 2006 Collections of United Colors of Benetton, Sisley and Segue has fast forwarded to Christmas. The big bags are fashionable and ideal for the runs of stuff ladies put in their bags especially during the Christmas season. The previous lightweight bags in the market today are in all the Segue shops in Glorietta 2 and Megamall Bldg A and all Gift Gates at Segue-to-Christmas sale prices!

Presented by:

Brought to you by:

WHO WILL BE THE FIRST?

Philippine Idol

JAN NIETO

The Hunky Idol.
Isang prinsipe pero may kulang sa buhay niya.
Ito na kaya ang hinahanap niya?

MAU MARCELO

The Soul Idol.
Laging pinpatawan ang kanyang kaute.
Maipatunayan na kaya niya ang tunay niyang gende?

GIAN MAGDANGAL

The Loveable Idol.
Nawala na ang lahat sa kanya.
Mahanap kaya niya ang lahat ng nawala sa kanya?

MAMAYANG 9PM!
MALALAMAN NA ANG HATOL NG BAYAN!

THE BIG 3 AT THE BIG DOME!
FINAL RESULTS NIGHT!

ABC
Iba Tayo!

Kapartner sa paghahanap ng 1st Philippine Idol

SM SUPERMALLS SM CINEMA YES! DREAM

Suportahan ang IDOL MO!
WEAR: YELLOW FOR MAU
ORANGE FOR GIAN
BLUE FOR JAN

HOLIDAY: Ivo Galleria Manila and Cinema Plaza Galleria Manila's department heads, led by regional manager Pauline Lee (front) (4 from left), pose with the children from Cardinal Sin Village.

Hotels join coin drive for Sta. Ana community

THE SMILES in their faces show they are having fun.

HOLIDAY INN GALLERIA MANILA AND Cinema Plaza Galleria Manila Hotels are supporting Robinsons Manila' The Gift of Change coin bank donation campaign.

The project will help provide for the needs of residents of Cardinal Sin Village in Pasay, Sta. Ana.

It is a joint undertaking of Robinsons Land Corporation's (RLC) commercial centers and hotels division.

Raul Rene Lee, the hotels' regional general manager, and other hotel executives personally distributed food packs and loot bags to children during an afternoon party at Sam's World Party Room, Robinsons Galleria. The hotels also donated boxes of books, towels and beddings.

RLC owns and operates commercial centers, residential and office condominiums, condotels, hotels and subdivisions, and hosts all over the Philippines. It is the largest office-space developer in the country today.

KIDS fall in line to receive gifts from Santa.

The SEP-URS Entrepreneurial Fusion

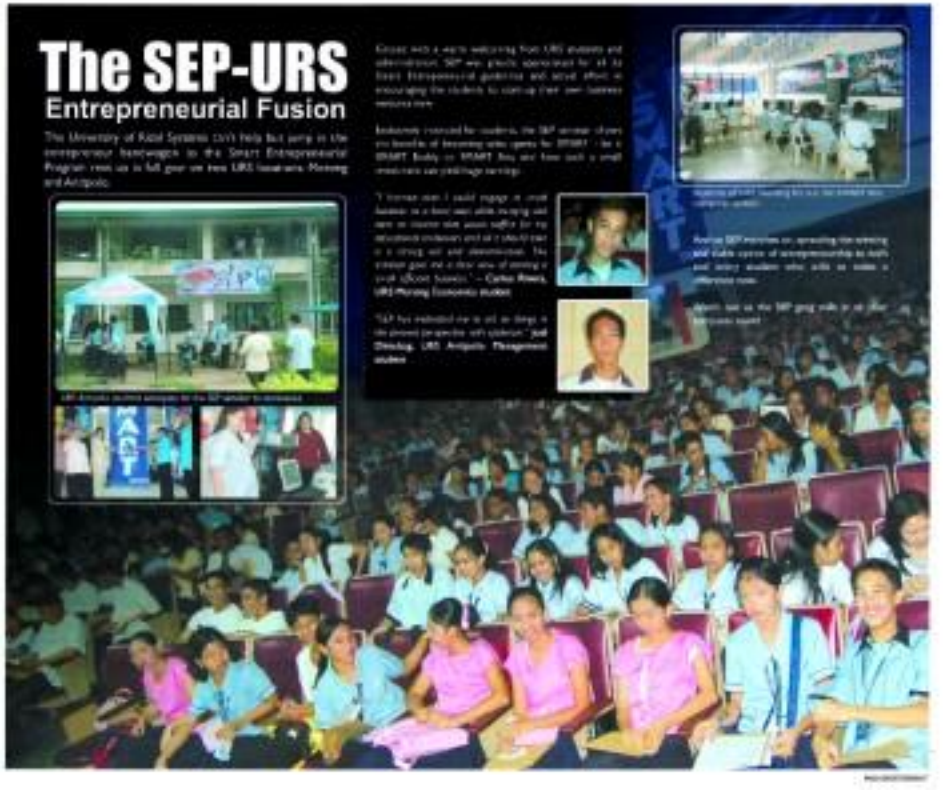
The University of Asia Systems (UAS) feels but jump in the entrepreneur bandwagon to the Smart Entrepreneurial Program (SEP) was on full gear on two URS locations, Marikina and Antipolo.

Armed with a warm welcoming from URS students and administration, SEP was given opportunities for all to learn entrepreneurial guidelines and active effort in encouraging the students to start-up their own business ventures here.

Academically motivated by students, the SEP seminar-clinics are beneficial in becoming some owners for SMART - be it SMART Buddy or SMART Bro, and have such a small investment can yield huge earnings.

"I learned that I could engage in small business in a food cart while studying and earn an income that would suffice for my educational endeavors and at the same time be a strong will and determination. The seminar gave me a new view of earning a profit without hassles." – Carlos Rivera, URS Morong Economics student

"SEP has motivated me to act on things in the present (proactive) with optimism." – Joel Dimalog, URS Antipolo Management student



Santa delivers

THOSE HOTELS SANTA IS ALL SET to deliver Christmas Gift Hampers this season.

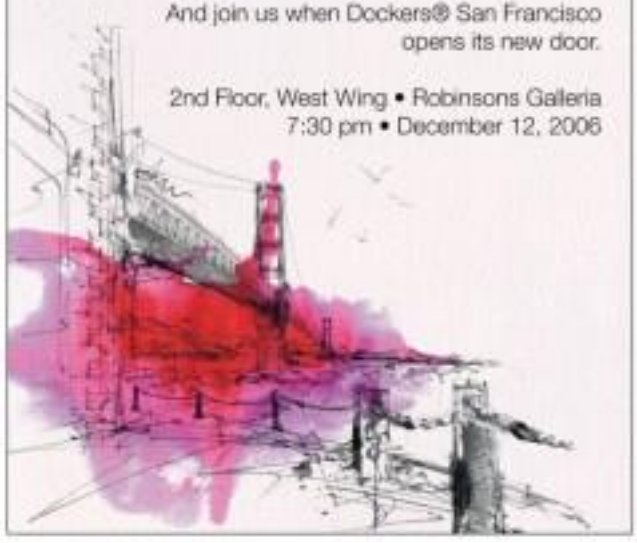
The basket is filled with an assortment of goodies and is available in three sizes to decorate small or 2020 sec. medium at P1,299 net and large at P1,800 net. Prices do not include delivery charges. Call 5227811 local 2002 or visit the Gingerbread House at the lobby.

DOCKERS
SAN FRANCISCO

Relax,
Enjoy the Holidays!

And join us when Dockers® San Francisco opens its new door.

2nd Floor, West Wing • Robinsons Galleria
7:30 pm • December 12, 2006



EMILY'S POST
Emily A. Marcelo

Spendthrift wife has OFW thinking of divorce

DEAR EMILY,

I am an OFW in my early 40s and unhappy with my second wife.

I had a live-in relationship from 1993-1995 and we had three kids. I ended the relationship because she was unfaithful to me, and she embezzled the money I sent her.

I then worked in Saudi Arabia in 1995. Two (2) instances in a row, she did not (how we met back in 2000). On my first vacation she told me our bank account had zero balance and no my next vacation she said she had the problem.

I also saw many compromising pictures of her with a man known to prey on women whose husbands worked overseas. It took me a while to get my kids from her. In 1998, I finally got them.

She now has two kids of her own by another man 21 years her junior. This medical of my children has not shown any concern for our kids even when one of them fainted on us recently.

In 2000, I met another woman through the Internet. We became friends and fell in love in cyberspace. He agreed to look at the state of my kid's health and give me feedback. I married her in 2002.

Everything seemed fine in the beginning, except for the initial negative reaction of my mother and children toward her. My friends told I married her only so my children's mom could have a caregiver. My mother said she was only after remittances.

Slowly, she won the heart of my children. I felt good about it. I thought I was finally being compensated for all my past heartaches.

In 2004, my problems started again when a section of our house was rented by a candidate who was a friend of my wife's family. She helped in his campaign and was constantly out of the house till early morning.

The campaign was long over but she still stayed out of the house until late in the evening. She said the P60,000 I sent every month was not enough to pay for the bills and my children's education.

I bought my family in Bulacan because I thought it was more affordable than Manila. The P65,000 was a lot more than the P35,000 I used to send when they were still in Manila.

She says she has gone into insurance, multilevel marketing, etc.

Our finances are so bad that I opened a separate account for my other children so they'll have money for school. This made my second wife angry.

As a result, I am sending more money each month and even borrowing heavily from a fellow Filipino in Saudi who charges a five percent (5%) interest.

I want to divorce her but the thought of leaving my nine-month-old daughter with her is killing me. The Holy Bible says a man cannot divorce his wife for any reason other than adultery.

How do I save my life?

FROM EXCESSIVE OFW

What is it about some spouses of OFWs that they think that the money sent to them from abroad grows miraculously on trees?

It's not only wives though who had strayed when their husbands are away. Some husbands of OFWs also create their own harem scarem.

Is it the loneliness of not having anyone around? Or is it the intoxication of having so much money when there was none before?

You, sir, are caught between a rock and a hard place. If you continue sending that precious money, your cheating is going it on the devil or the saving it into the deep blue sea. Same, same.

Plans to change the spending habit of your family? Initiate the change yourself?

Since you come home for vacation anyway, make arrangements with the bank or a very trusted friend to pay your monthly bills like water, electricity, cable. Then go to the school or your kids and tell the registrar to bill you directly for their tuition fees.

Talk to your kids seriously and ask them to conserve their monthly allowance. Tell them in stark as in. Don't give more than they need.

There are a mini budget for the extravagant wife of yours. Think of divorce after you've cleaned up this mess. Put your family on a tight leash and don't make them feel like they have a genuine from the luxury office every month.

No amount of loan-pulling will solve your problem. Have this financial hemorrhage is likely to continue whether you like it or not, put the brakes in their spending yourself and make the change you want happen.

For everybody on a money diet and not if they care enough to save for their own future. Doesn't your wife realize the reason he remaining in this kind of money-horror? Can't she see tomorrow in her crystal ball?

E-mail her another at emmyc-fr@hotmail.com.ph. Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letter to her care of Features, GMA Marcelo on-line the program Wake Up Philippines, 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dzBB 594.3 FM.

Mobile phone service offers special Christmas package

SUN CELLULAR, WITH Nokia, is giving away cash prizes to lucky Sun Group Plans and Load-Up, Own-a-Phone subscribers this Christmas.

Until Dec. 31, all new subscriptions under Sun Group Plans 995, 899 and 699, and Load-up, Own-a-Phone for Nokia handsets are automatically entitled to electronic raffle coupons for a chance to win an exotic as P500,000 in the grand raffle draw.

Consolation prizes ranging from P1,000-P50,000 may also be won during the preliminary and grand raffle draws.

Group Plan 999 offers three free handsets and postpaid lines, for a monthly service fee of 999. Group Plan 899 offers two free Nokia 1112 handsets and postpaid lines, for a monthly service fee of 899.

Sun Cellular's Load-Up, Own-a-Phone deal subscriptions come in P350 and P450 monthly fixed loads with a free handset. Subscribers may also avail themselves of Sun Cellular's Unlimited services. These offers have a 24-month holding period.

Visit The Sun Shop nearest you or call the hotline via 208 (using a Sun Cellular fixed or 2020020.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and photo (single or with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown), if any, to the Inquirer, 185 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., 1200 Makati City or Post Office Box 1200 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcement will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to readers.

VILLEZ-DEBUT

Kristine Villez, daughter of Jess and Judit Villez, will celebrate her 18th birthday with a dinner dance on Dec. 16 at the Fernwood Gardens, Quezon City. **Eric Pineda** designed three gowns for the debutante.

NGO-CHUA

Nelson Ngo, son of Steve and Ruhi Ngo, will wed **Serwadeh Chua**, daughter of Eddie and Estelinda Chua, on Dec. 17 at United United Methodist Church, Tal. Kalaw Ayuntamiento will follow at Gloria Maris Restaurant, CCP Complex, Roxas Blvd. **Eric Pineda** designed the bride's gown in ivory silk charmeuse satin.

LAPIDEZ-NAVARRA

Jennifer Clemente Navarra, daughter of Rolando S. Navarra and Aurelia Clemente, tied the knot recently with Father Leopoldo Lapidez, son of Bobyzar Lapidez and Rosario Leopoldo, in the St. Joseph the Worker Parish, Jaro, Iloilo City Reception followed at the Sunset Terrace at Boracay Mandarin Island Hotel, Iloilo City.

BUENA-LAUDANO

Philip Mendiola Buena, son of Hortencio and Lawyer Teodista Buena, and Chiqui Manuel Lagman, daughter of Asuncion and Brigido Lagman, were married recently at the Capitol City Baptist Church.

ISABELA-ARCEBAL

Jeffery Padilla, son of Adolfo and Charito Padilla, will wed Margiri Arcibal, daughter of Col. Bogtakin (ret.) and Shirley Arcibal, on Dec. 16 at the Broken Fortress, Distrito Pintor, Pinto and Wildlife, Lookout, Lapu City. Reception will follow at the Sala-Sala Dining Hall, BFPW

CANLAS-INOCIAL

Mrs. R. Canlas and Pearl E. Inocial will exchange vows on Dec. 20 at the San Antonio de Padua Parish Church. Reception will follow at Nelso Country Club, Tiberon, Mabalacat.

MILES-LIM UY

Pierre Benvenido Miles will tie the knot with Stephanie Lim Uy Dec. 22 at the Memorial Shrine of the Sacred Heart. A beach-inspired reception, styled by Haley Bautista, will follow at the Boracay Lab. Both bride and groom will wear clothes by Rambo del Leon.

BAESA-ROQUE

Rafael E. Baesa and **Alexandra M. Roque** will wed on Dec. 23 at Immaculate Conception Minor Seminary chapel, Talisay, Cagayan. Reception will follow at the seminary gym. Rev. Fr. Fernando Cuenco will officiate.

SIA-REYES

Dr. Jan Harold Sia, son of Santiago and Dr. Rosita Sia, will wed Dr. Pia Natalya Reyes, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Balbazar and Marita Reyes, on Dec. 30 at the San Agustin Church, Intramuros. Reception will follow at Hacienda Kinabuan, Bais. Bridal designed and executed the gowns of the bride and her entourage.

RICO-JUGSON

Jose Rico Jr., son of lawyer Jose and Norma Rico, will wed Mylene Jugson, daughter of Victoriano and Ofelia Jugson, on Jan. 19 at the Shrine of Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life, Reclamation Area, Pasay City. Reception follows at Pope John Paul II Youth Center (Shrine of Jesus Hall), Reclamation Area, Pasay City.

REBS-LEPINES

Dennis Rebs, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mario Rebs, and Reggie Lepines, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rodrigo Lepines, will exchange vows Dec. 16, 10 a.m., at the San Sebastian Cathedral, Lipa City, Batangas. Reception will follow at El Grande Residencia Hotel and Resort. The bride's gown is designed by Monique Lhuillier.

WITH Anita Chua and Junior Chua

WITH Enrique Chua and Michael Tan

FORMER Rep. Edith Villanueva, Sec. Nikki Cousiño, Shaika and Mayor Eric Sarmiento, Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz, Dr. Hector Torre and former Gov. Daniel Lee

THE DSP family: Albert Ann, Vicky, the couple Linda, Eduard Victor and Bryan Yap

Negros' wedding of the decade

By Raejie Cueva Jr.
Contributor

NEGROS IS MORE THAN IT'S sprawling hacienda and ancestral mansions. Behind the glamour of Negrense social gatherings are the sweet smiles of these genteel people.

Just recently, Talisay's most eligible bachelor, Wayne Kim Sarmiento, M.D., tied the knot with Travel Lounge hairstar and Chinese peruvian beauty Shaika Yap in what was tagged by local dailies as the biggest wedding in Negros' history. It was a fairy-tale night filled with love, opulence and grandeur, where the crème jewelry sparkled as their equally elegant bearers. Ladies of the dominion decked their best in designer gowns, while the men in their finest barongs.

The wedding of weddings was held in the Queen of Peace Church with Bishop Camilo Gregorio as the main celebrant. It was the bride's dream wedding come true.

Shaika was lovely and regal in her intricately embroidered gown done in shades of bone and ecru, embellished with Swarovski crystals and crystal beads in lavish fabric of duchess satin and tissue organza. Her pamuda was delicately handcrafted with floral embroidery and also embellished with crystals. It was another Tony de Ramos masterpiece. She walked down the aisle like a princess toward the arms of her waiting prince.

The highest social event of the millennium attendance of more than a thousand of Negros' finest families, necessities, political and state leaders. Some guests joined us from China, America and various capital cities of the Philippines, including Asia Brewery and Philippine Airlines' young Turjan, and the youngest sponsor, Michael Tan, son of tycoon Lucio Tan, who arrived with his whole family. Shaika and Michael share a special friendship as both used to have good fun together, with both their families sharing that special bond of friendship.

The couple enjoys a certain degree of community recognition and importance as Shaika is the daughter of renowned entrepreneurs Eddie and Vicky Yap, owners of one of Bacolod's biggest and most admired Chinese clans...the influential Ay and Yap families. The groom, meanwhile, is one of Talisay's most loved public servants who rose from the ranks—from councilor to vice mayor to mayor. He is the son of the late Tito and Serena Sarmiento.

Among the big names of Philippine high society who stood as sponsors were: Gretchen Lopengco; Benet Yu Uy, executive VP and special executive to the chair of Philippine Airlines; Sen. Richard Gordon; Cebu Mayor Gerry Tinio; Gov. Joseph Ilustrisimo; Mayor Cyrus Ibiu de la Cruz; former Gov. Daniel Lacson; Mayor Leche Escalona; Dr. Doctor Nora of Dr. Torre Medical Center; Ita Hernandez; Anita Chua; Junior Chua; Ayee Kuchinarc; Dr. Carlito Lee; Michelle Salmanday; Jovelina; Angela de Leon; Dr. Sweetart; Teresita Lizares; Mary Ann Yap; Edith Villanueva.

St. John's Savings Center, the wedding venue, was draped with vines of orchids and hibiscus fabric. Guests were greeted at the entrance by a hacienda setup complete with plants, old cart wheels and other wooden furniture. The presidential table was a royal setup for 60 people. Candles, flowers and a hacienda theme centerpieces added to the drama.

ABOVE by Tingting Ebarle, Multimedia Artist

THE GODPARENTS

Magsalin, the couple, David Lucson, Jordan Ramsay and Michael Serrano

The couple were transformed into a virtual Lamb, whose majestic and crowning point—were together with plumes like huge birds' tears and bromeliads were arranged strategically. Lighting effects from the cupid fairambs and the pin lights gave the whole venue a warm glow of fuchsia and yellow.

The bride's parents were all smiles to see their lovely daughter in the arms of the respected and loving Galway mayor, a doctor by profession who finds satisfaction and happiness in rendering public service. Kris is a bright religious, down-to-earth and intelligent person.

Eddie and Ricky (by now have sought well the interest in life in their daughters' as Manila to serve an editor with Commissioner or at a young age. Their flagship business, Travel Lounge, continues to be the region's top sales distributor of Philippine holidays for eight consecutive years.

The Saracen-Yap wedding will surely go down in history as one of the biggest and most lavish weddings in Negros.

PURELY PERSONAL
Josephine Duranog

St. Joseph 'stars' in Nativity story

MY FRIEND JAMES SCIBAS, A NATIVE OF Hohhildanca, Batangas, and a resident of San Angeles, California, e-mailed to say St. Joseph was getting his due in "The Nativity Story"—now showing in the United States.

He remembers St. Joseph as the New Testament as not having said a word when he married the Blessed Virgin Mary and reverently looked her son Jesus whom the Mother of God could give birth.

This time, Aquino quoted screenwriter Mike Rich: Joseph is the movie's really personal's quiet and a hard hero in the story.

Rich stressed, "Of all the characters... in the script and during the writing of it, no character evolved more on the page than Joseph."

AFTER the Catholic Mass at Manila Cathedral Archbishop Orlando Talampas (center) with the clergy, lay ministers, mayor Carrie Bautista Cuthalo, president Aurora Symonds and Cuthalo founder Imelda Calangian. At the back is Msgr. Hector Cortes, rector of Manila Cathedral. (Edgar Jose)

SELPHY
Canon

Producer Marie Bowers, a former altar boy, said the first time of Oil, Joseph was a typical carpenter character in the Christmas story. "It is a version of a simple man trying to do what he thinks is right and there's something heroic about that."

Director Catherine Hardwicke, a Protestant, said she hoped the film would let viewers experience the Christmas story in a new way, making it a transformative experience that would fully immerse them in another world through the music, clothes, textures, motion of the actors... "a world they've never been before."

Joseph is portrayed by a 26-year-old Guatemalan newcomer who describes his up-bringing as "very Christian." Elizabeth is portrayed by Shohreh Aghdashloo, who was raised a Muslim. She meditates every morning "so she can come up with a part of you that can share a calling with unconditional love."

The movie was previewed recently at the Dolmelia Cinema 4 in Makati by the Asian Development Foundation and Ambassador Kenneth de Villa, in collaboration with Wilson Yulo Que of Protect Films.

Mass draws thousands

The Manila Cathedral was packed as thousands attended the 2 p.m. Misa Mayor during the celebration by the Cathedral de la Inmaculada Concepcion of the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Papangunan Archbishop Orlando Talampas led nine other priests in celebrating Mass. Cuss Sumacaria sang. With the newly restored pipe organ playing for the first time, the liturgical service was was glorious and solemn.

Archbishop Talampas pointed out that Filipinos had always been devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary which, perhaps, explained why the Philippines was called "pueblo amante de Maria."

Imelda Calangian heralded the arch as hermana mayor Carrie Bautista. Cons. Andrew Bautista Sagado, representing the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), received the sash of the Grand Marshall. All branches of the AFP led the procession in front of the Cathedral.

More than 80 images of the Blessed Virgin joined the procession. The pilgrim image of Our Lady of Piat from Cagayan Valley and the replica image of Our Lady of Caysasay from Taal, Batangas, brought up the rear.

The Cathedra del Nuestra Señora del Buen Suceso was behind the patronato of Pandacan.

Qalas Emmanuel

The Carmelli Charity Association will bring clothes and food to 100 poor children in Lubang, Oriental Mindoro, Dec. 17. Rev. Benedicto Manabat, founder of the charity project, is asking for donations in cash or kind.

Please deliver to Eucharistic Formation Center, 20 Sampaguita Drive, New Manila, Quezon City, or text 0919-5122180 or 0921-7909961, or deposit to Metro Commerce de Caridad Savings #0166-10257-1 or Equitable PCIB, Bolinao, Avenida branch.

Thank you for your kindness.

Visit

The instrument of God Juanita Rufino will be in the Philippines Dec. 16-19. Her schedule is: Dec. 16, 7 p.m., talk after Bishop Teodoro Bacani's 6 p.m. Mass at El Shaddai, Ilang, Pandacan; Dec. 17, 3 p.m., talk after the Mass at Cara Maria, Cartajar, Tarlac, Davao City; and Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m., talk after Archbishop Ramon Arguelles' 6:30 p.m. Mass at St. James Parish, Ayala Alabang.

Marcelle will have a private audience with Cardinals Cardinal Rosales Dec. 19, 4 p.m., at the Archbishop's. Call 7138211 or text Belen Bacho at 0917 9784411.

Dedication

Sta. Cruz Church in Manila has the Blessed Sacrament exposed the whole day everyday. The Blessed Sacrament fathers hope to have the church elevated to a shrine soon. At 6:15 p.m., Dec. 17, the church will be dedicated.

Fara Hermagmen Garcia, 888, was ordained yesterday by Cubaonoan Bishop Ambrosio Bulaod, SSS.

Devotees help

Tina Nuez Bato devotees led by Rosellyn Bhagayang will leave Dec. 15, 4 a.m., for Lagaspi City to bring food and clothes to Typhoon Reming victims. Rosellyn said it was like 1991 during the Mt. Pinatubo eruption when the Virgin was guiding her.

A poor young woman went to Rosellyn's house asking for food but the hungry child died. When Rosellyn asked where her house was, she said it was near the market but was gone.

Rosellyn gave her food and tricycle fare.

Week later, when Rosellyn looked for the house, she found a church. The image in the altar looked like her. Poor Rose.

Those who wish to donate or join the group can call 4144870 or text 0920-9268871. The convoy will move at Magallanes Shell station, Bel-Air Five.

Anniversary

Fr. Lorenzo Marco celebrated his first anniversary as a priest with a Holy Mass at the Immaculate Incase of the Eucharistic Sisters of Mary, 63 Morning Star Drive, Sauvelle Vidal., Cubao, QC.

Meanwhile, "Purely Personal Book of Miracles" is available again at National Bookstore in Harrison Plaza.

All the best gifts
come in boxes.

And this Christmas is certainly no exception.
There's no better way to celebrate the Holiday Season
than with friends, family and FRANZIA.
The World's Most Popular Wine.
With its patented Smart Tap packaging,
FRANZIA truly makes this and any occasion special
anywhere, anytime.
FRANZIA
PRODUCT OF THE U.S.A.

DWCE ids and unemployed women of Calatagan, Batangas, are now earning income crafting handmade candles. Photo shows Dina H. Ecleo (center), chair of the Enrique Zobel Foundation Inc., which sponsored a candle-making seminar for Calatagan women. Watcher are seminar instructors (look rare, from left) Adriana Bonnet, Bong Bautista, Art Tabanda, EZF executive director Jose Rodriguez, and some of the participants.

Candle makers of Batangas

TWENTY-FIVE UNEMPLOYED WOMEN OF Calatagan, Batangas, are now earning P900-P1,200 each from handmade candles.

The newly trained members of the Calatagan Livelihood Multi-Purpose Cooperative learned the craft through a livelihood seminar organized by the Enrique Zobel Foundation Inc. (EZFI).

The 25 women completed the six-day hands-on training on basic candle making, mould-making and advanced candle-making techniques conducted by Art Tabanda, Bong Bautista and Adriana Bonnet.

They then attended a per-membership education seminar done organized themselves as a cooperative with the Cooperative Development Authority. Underway is the registration of their business name, Bachelor Craft Philippines, with the Department of Trade and Industry.

EZF awarded a loan as initial capital of the group.

The group now produces candles for corporate giveaways. It has been sub-contracted by Blue Magic Candles, a souvenir and gift shop.

Through livelihood projects, EZF tries to fulfill its mission to help entrain the lives of people in Calatagan. It celebrates the Sa'y Institusyonal philanthropy Enrique Zobel.

Established in 1998, the foundation also offers teacher training seminars, provides public school students access to audio-visual learning packages, and conducts health and nutrition teach-ins.

ANSWERS TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

Sunday LIFESTYLE

FAÇADE of the first WMSU building, which is now the College of Education

Under the leadership of Dr. Eldigario D. Gonzales, the Western Mindanao State University is fully engaged in the lives and concerns of the people it serves

Zamboanga university is no ivory tower

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

COLLEGES AND universities are sometimes assigned of being ivory towers—dedicated to the pursuit of education whether or not that relates to the reality of living, even just surviving.

But the century-old Western Mindanao State University (WMSU) is in the think of life in Zamboanga City—helping clean up its environment and preserve its natural resources, bringing marginalized groups into the mainstream, advancing the children on issues of concern to the residents.

Dr. Eldigario D. Gonzales, who has been president of the university for nine years and who is also currently president of the Philippine Association of State Universities and Colleges (PASUC), would not have it any other way.

During the recent formal launch of the university's centennial celebration, Gonzales reminded the WMSU community: "We have to leave the ivory tower and go to the community that needs support like persons who are differently abled and indigenous populations. WMSU must go beyond the classrooms."

Gonzales exhorted the academic community to continue using their talents and passion for the uplift of marginalized sectors in Zamboanga. He said WMSU should be a university for people and the community.

Gonzales favors greater engagement by the university to the community, treating an institution with "no boundaries." The university president said: "[WMSU] has gone beyond the four walls of the classrooms and the campus" and was involved in the social engineering of the community.

He gave the assurance that the university would "continue to think of programs that will help improve the community, particularly the lives of marginalized sectors."

The university president pointed out, with justifiable pride, that almost every college or unit of the educational institutions had an extension program that "promoted volunteerism and partnership with the community."

ZAMBOANGA 3

The Philam Group of Companies offers you a full range of financial services: Life and General Insurance • Property and Casualty Insurance • Health Care Management • Pre-Need Plans • Banking • Mutual Funds • Property Development • Credit Cards • Business Process Outsourcing • Bancassurance • Financial Advisory Services

2006 Araw Values Advertising Awards on Dec. 11

The prestigious industry Araw Values Advertising (AVA) Awards ceremony for this year will be held on Dec. 11, at 6 p.m. at the Carlos P Romulo Auditorium at RCBC Plaza, Makati City under the auspices of the Advertising Foundation of the Philippines (Ad Foundation) in collaboration with the Advertising Board of the Philippines (Ad-Board). The 5th Araw Values Advertising Awards will honor twelve organizations as the moving spirit behind values centered advertising in post-Martial Law and pre-AVA years and the winners of the 2006 Competition for Branded Communications with values messages and Advocacy/Institutional Advertising.

The biennial industry awards does will be led by 2005 AVA overall organizing committee lead chair, Raul S. Aboitiz, and co-chair, Antonio P. Sunico, together with the Ad Foundation chair of the board, Jaleelp G. Cruz, and the AdBoard chair, Ms. Teresa VS. Ismaw, ABS-CBN, with its Creative Production Group headed by Chi Guerrero, will take charge of staging the Dec. 11 awarding ceremonies and its delayed telecast special in January 2007.

"Working on the 2006 Araw Values Advertising Awards since March 2006 is a team of select industry executives, borrowed together as volunteers for organizing and project management skills and their values orientation thrust", cited 2006 AVA lead chair Raul Aboitiz, serving as co-chair is Antonio P. Sunico, former Ad Foundation chair of the board and the 2002 AVA honoree as one of the individuals responsible for initiating values oriented advertising. Other members of the 2006 Araw Values Advertising (AVA) Awards organizing committee are announced young creative director, Herbie Ayuno, as chair of creative committee; multi-awarded agency head Socky Pitargue, as chair of rules committee; agency executive Jose Rafael Hernandez, as chair of search committee; media agency country manager Liselle Wanting, as chair of ways and means; noted production specialists Bart Miranda and Arjay Gambol, as co-chairs of technical production; media executive and Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas chair of the board, Rogerio Nicolas Jr., as chair of PR and information committee; AdBoard and Ad Foundation treasurer and voice talent, Edgar Severin, as the finance committee chair; Ad Foundation assistant board secretary and executive director Linda C. Gamboa, as overall project manager, and AdBoard staff assistant Raymund Fuentes, as coordinator. Also serving as special consultants of 2006 AVA organizing committee are past 2002 and 2004 AVA overall chairs, Arlando C. Lucas and Ruben C. Santos, Jr., respectively.

Socky Pitargue, 2006 AVA rules committee chair, said that the harvest for this year's biennial competition is very promising and undoubtedly manifests the industry's social responsibility. "The multi-tiered judging of all the entries took a lot of sweltime work for the various panels of judges, specially in the preliminary and finalists judging stages", Pitargue added. A special jury, composed of eminent personalities from the industry, cultural, artistic, and diplomatic communities was retained the panel for the Platinum awards, the highest honor for an entry in Branded Communications and/or Advocacy Institutional Advertising. Independent auditing firm, Punong-bayan & Araullo, is the official auditing firm of 2006 AVA Competition in all three levels of judging.

Exclusive beneficiary of the 2006 AVA Awards Night and its telecast special over ABS-CBN, as the official TV network carrier for 2006, is Advertising Foundation of the Philippines, the social development body of the industry. Jaleelp Cruz, its incumbent chair, said that all net proceeds of 2006 AVA will be used to sustain the foundation operations and its social marketing endeavors along values education, nation building and long term industry welfare as well.

Winners of the bronze, silver, gold, and platinum awards will be revealed and honored with the Araw trophies on Dec. 11. Tickets for the Awards Night are available at the AdBoard office for sale to industry members at P500 each, for students, at P50 - P100 each.

2006 ARAW VALUES AWARDS FINALISTS

ADVOCACY

Single TV

Title	Advertiser	Product	Agency
Adult	Pfizer Inflact Pharmaceuticals	Pfizer Corporate	All Communications
Ba...	ABS-CBN	ABS-CBN	ABS-CBN CSR
Bayan	ABS-CBN	ABS-CBN	ABS-CBN CSR
Bayan Mo...	Pondo ng Pinoy	Pondo ng Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Bayanan	Pondo ng Pinoy	Pondo ng Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Anatomy	LEAD	LEAD	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Child	Pondo ng Pinoy	Pondo ng Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Chubby	Unilever Ice Cream	Unilever	BBDO Guerrero Group
Dad	Unilever Ice Cream	Unilever	BBDO Guerrero Group
Driving	Unilever Ice Cream	Unilever	BBDO Guerrero Group
Fashion	Pfizer Pagalon	Pfizer Pagalon	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Friend	Century Foundation	Bioflavonoid	Grupo Gallo & Co.
Gabriel Bautista	Commercial Lab	Commercial Laboratories	ADB Philippines
GOD	Pfizer Inflact	Pfizer Inflact	BBDO Guerrero Group
Gift with	UFM Value of Tithes Effect	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Hero	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Library	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Lourdes' Song	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Mangkukulam	UFM Value of Tithes Effect	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Mother	Dept. of Health and Development	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Office	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond	UFM Corporate Account Division
Pinoy Ako Effect	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Rio	Roman Catholic Bishops	CBCP	Grupo Gallo & Co.
Rizal	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Sakit	Unilever Ice Cream	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Sa Mga Liko	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Sabon	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Sweet 16	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tito	The Bible Society of Phil., Inc.	Bible Society	Grupo Gallo & Co.
Transformation	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tsinelas	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Tsinelas Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Wonderful Son	Thailand Foundation, Inc.	Thailand Foundation	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Wrinkle	Philippine Red Cross	Philippine Red Cross	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Foundation	National Commission on Women	Foundation	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Pakikipag-...	Ad Foundation Inc.	Ad Foundation Pakikipag-...	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Pinoy	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Take Care	Ideal Condoms	Ideal Condoms	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatak Pi...	National Commission on Women	Foundation	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Holiday	Philippine Red Cross	Philippine Red Cross	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Learning	Philippine Red Cross	Philippine Red Cross	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Speaker	ABC 5	ABC 5	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Vincent & Kevin	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Warrior	Unilever Foods	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi

Single Radio

Title	Advertiser	Product	Agency
Apology (Bubble)	Mercy Global Pharmaceuticals	Mercy Corporate	ADB Communications
Apology (Bubble)	Mercy Global Pharmaceuticals	Mercy Corporate	ADB Communications
Cradle	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Drugs	Ad Foundation Inc.	Ad Foundation	Campaign & Sons
Drugs	Ad Foundation Inc.	Ad Foundation	Campaign & Sons
Drugs	Ad Foundation Inc.	Ad Foundation	Campaign & Sons
Dr. Chng	LEAD	Logo ng Mga Kabataan	APT Team
Ego	Dept. of Social Welfare and Dev't	DSWD Fathers' Effect	TBWA Philippines
Hide Me	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Magnet	Dept. of Social Welfare and Dev't	DSWD Fathers' Effect	TBWA Philippines
Pregnant	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Rebirth	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Rebirth	Dept. of Social Welfare and Dev't	DSWD Fathers' Effect	TBWA Philippines
Sermon	Dept. of Social Welfare and Dev't	DSWD Fathers' Effect	TBWA Philippines
Sermon	LEAD	Logo ng Mga Kabataan	APT Team
Survivors	ABC 5	ABC 5	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
"My Time To Grow"	Dept. of Education Inc. Nutrition	DEP. Nutrition Effect	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay	Mothers Development Foundation	Mothers Development	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay	Teachers Foundation, Inc.	Teachers Foundation	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay	National Commission on Women	Foundation	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Tatay Ko Po	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	ADB Philippines

Single Print

Title	Advertiser	Product	Agency
Ate	CBCP	CBCP Anti-Abortion and Anti-Contraception	All The Media
Ate	Unilever	Unilever	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Brothers	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi
Child	LEAD	Program ng Pinoy	LEAD Program
Child	Pondo ng Pinoy	Program ng Pinoy	LEAD Program
Children in the Streets	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond	UFM Diamond
Delivery Room	Universal Robina Corporation	Robina Corporation	Campaign & Sons
Dialysis	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi	Ace Saatchi & Saatchi

Zamboanga university is no ivory tower

Turn to page 11

WMSU, he said, was helping advance the idea of sustainable development (development that ensured resources were preserved and conserved for future generations) and the alleviation of poverty. He said the school had accepted relief evacuees and even had scholarships for both members of indigenous communities and children of former anti-government fighters.

Mangrove protectors

And so, during the launch, founders signed on behalf of WMSU a memorandum of understanding with the regional office of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, represented by director Edgardo Bergante, making the university a partner in the government agency's Adopt a Wetland Program.

Among other things, the partnership will involve the restoration, rehabilitation and protection of mangroves and coastal communities. The university's involvement was an initiative of the Institute of Physical Education, Sports and Cultural Affairs. With many of its forest settlers children, the institute felt it should contribute to the preservation of the environment due to students and faculty stayed so much.

The university also told the groundwork for a pioneering program to bring education to the nomadic, boat-dwelling Badjaos. Film-based in September was what WMSU experts described as "formal elementary education in a very informal setting." Collaborating with the National Commission on Indigenous Populations and the Department of Education, instruction was adapted to the culture and traditions of the Badjaos who moved from place to place.

Instead of a firmly grounded building with four walls, the final floor would have a mobile, rather sailing, school. They would be taught on a specially constructed catamaran-type [illegible] boat with two engines to move it around the coastal areas. Some 60 Badjao school-age children were expected in initial participants, with some of them mothers being host inside a classroom for even a day.

In what appears to be a variation of the saying "If Muhammad can't come to the mountain, the mountain will come to Muhammad," WMSU is bringing the school to the students who find it difficult, because of their way of life, to come to school.

Also, as part of WMSU's desire to be engaged in issues of interest to the community, it hosted a forum on the proposal to make Zamboanga City a province. Executive openly admits he is/was the idea of creating Zamboanga Hermosa, proposed some for the new province, while many members of the WMSU academic community are not so taken with the notion.

But he felt that, as a source of scholarship and learning, WMSU should be fully engaged in the issue and other socio-political concerns and should actively participate in debates, heresy, the forum.

Distinguished graduates

While WMSU's presence has given it bragging rights, it has just as much to be proud of about its past. The gallery of its alumni speaks volumes about the kind of instruction the university dispenses.

Maverick Mayor Cesar C. Climaco, rumored to have been assassinated by members of the military for his defiance of martial rule; Miguel Velarde, who composed Imelda R. Marcos' signature song "Until we love," and "Dear"; Evangelina Macatangay, who became First Lady of the Philippines and mother of President Macapagal-Arroyo; businessman-industrialist Teodoro Asunto; and Rafael C. Climaco, former justice of the court of appeals, are just a few of graduates who brought distinction to the university.

The WMSU faculty was also graced by such luminaries as Geronima Pecson, former senator, and well-known short-story writer Jesusa T. Baquiz.

All this certainly makes for a very productive and distinguished 100 years. But WMSU, which traces its roots back to 1906 when it opened as a high school, almost missed the important milestone with documents misplaced or gone missing over the years. So it is now making up for lost time with a year-long celebration that will include a grand alumni homecoming Dec. 14-16.

Anyway, as Filipinos say, "Huli man daw at magaling, naihahabol 'dia."

CAPIZ windows suggest the College of Education is much older than other buildings in the WMSU campus. (above) The Palma-de Taisakan, a group of percussionists with members ranging in age from 14-67, performs during the centennial celebration launch. (left)

WMSU Mayor Ferro, 67, leads the Palma-de Taisakan.

DR. ELDIGARIO Gonzales says WMSU's faculty and students should leave the ivory tower and become fully engaged in the community.

DENR Regional Director Edgardo Bergante, Dr. Gonzales and Mampang Barangay Chair Pedro Estrada sign the memorandum of agreement for the Adopt a Wetland program.

STARTING as a high-school then a teacher training institution, WMSU now has 15 colleges and institutions.

PAMPERING.
WITH A PASSION.

Marriott Hotel crowns the rich,
relaxing resort culture at...

The Residential Resort
at Newport City

The Manil's First and Only Luxury Resort Residences

Don't just rest—revitalize yourself. Don't just dine— have. Don't just buy— shop in style. Don't just live— live it up! At The Residential Resort in Newport City, going where your heart leads you is an enormous rule.

Here, the resort embraces reveals itself in breathtaking ways. From your Lake Las Vegas-inspired, Mediterranean-style community. To villa-like executive studio-to-two bedroom homes with wide windows and balconies that welcome sunlight, fresh air and the sweet scents of nature. To scores of fun amenities enveloping the homes. Play hard at the badminton courts, jogging paths, lawn soccer or putting green. Unwind at one of the pools. Or breathe easy at the playgrounds, picnic grounds, reflexology path or tennis.

Completing the resort atmosphere at Newport City are sprawling parks and verdant gardens. A private golfers championship-level Villanova golf course. And a vibrant leisure complex overflowing with chic boutiques, restaurants, bars, cafes and fun outlets.

And with a Marriott Hotel literally at your backyard, you can kick back and enjoy the weekend to one of its well-appointed rooms. Rejuvenate yourself in a full service health spa. And celebrate life's milestones in a fine dining restaurant.

Experience Marriott's world-renowned hospitality in a unique resort setting. And enjoy pampering to its utmost here at The Residential Resort at Newport City.

OWN A RESIDENTIAL UNIT FOR AS LOW AS **$300** A MONTH.

FOR A TASTE OF THE UNIQUE RESORT EXPERIENCE,
VISIT US TODAY AT THE NEWPORT CITY GRAND SHOWROOM.

Exclusive Marketing Arm

Newport City Information Center, Newport City, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines

(632) 855-7580 • 855-7583 • 855-7594 • 855-7586

Megaworld Newport
Property Holdings, Inc.

Sunday LIFESTYLE

MSG RCVD: the curse of the unlimited text plan

By Jose Javier Reyes
Comic Strider

AS MUCH AS WE HATE TO ADMIT IT, WE can no longer imagine a time and place in human history when the cellular phone did not exist. To live and breathe in the 21st century without instant and effective access to the rest of mankind (or those who we still choose to consider as fellow humans) have become unfathomable.

Now that we have cell phones that can provide weather and traffic updates...not to mention the latest news involving celebrity suspicions, admissions to impeachment or who Pinky Pascual is dating...[late] [tiny gadgets tacked] to our persons has practically become a biological appendage.

It is not enough that you can link up with anyone on the planet with the right buttons on the keyboard. You can also take all-too-close photos and videos, play mind-stretching games, send e-mails and even swap footages of the latest sex scandals involving your favorite celebrities or wannabes.

And in a country like ours [bursting] of a communal preoccupation for nostalgia, cheap entertainment, gossip and intrigue, we have turned this technological advancement into one more national treasure of habit. After all, it is only in the Philippines that we have transformed the word Khareezah into a verb ("I Khareezah my ex-ga ako").

But [then again], we can only take the good with the inevitable bad. Cell phones also brought about the marvel of SMS or short message service.

Text messaging has become second nature to any hand phone subscriber not only because it is cheaper to use. It has also become a means by which any individual—depressed, phone bored or suffering from post-modernist angst—can assure everyone on his sphere of existence that he is still a functioning child of the universe.

It is also bad enough that for the sake of speed sorting text messages, we are now threatening the active use of vowels to write any language as well deteriorating existing rules of grammar. Worse, a great number of people have become purely addicted to text messaging that their family units (here keyboards as if it were a part of their respiratory system).

Such creatures are not content with the simple act of polite and necessary communications. Instead, they load messages ranging from the mundane "Hi, how are you na?" to [the] expressions of epic kind containing messages ranging from "God bless" or quotations from the Bible that make the recipients feel like they are the greatest sinners this side of Greenwich.

Even more distressing are the determinedly stupid jokes or the threatening statements that if the recipient does not resend the message to five thousand other numbskulls, a curse far more horrid than the one thrown to "Bobcb" would fall on all the members of his family and friends.

Moreover, text addicts have developed a neurotic compulsion to send messages to everyone listed in their address books, devoid of any rhyme or reason and unconscious of time and/or place, just for the sake of maximizing their unlimited (SMS) privileges.

You realize that you have a major problem in your hands when approximately 40 percent of texts you receive per day come from people you know who are trying to be cute. You know you are on your way to a nervous breakdown when at 3 a.m. your phone jolts you from your deep. You stumble out of bed and [end up reading] a "knock-knock" joke to an excerpt from the lament of Dud to the lightworm.

Okay, it can be somewhat touching to be so-minded that, in this crazed and [rebelling] world, anniversary still constitutes a "let to receive a bulk of forwarded messages so obviously pre-fabricated and possessing all the sincerity and seriousness of the literature found in skin whiteners is simply mind-boggling.

One begins to wonder who composes all these stupid [text] messages or who invents those completely inside jokes possessing a special-use [encompass]'s sense of humor. (So is even more detailed by the fact that there are people who actually think these stupid expressions of affirmation and attempts at humor are actually any good and deserve to be appreciated by people who have accidentally [increased] their lives.

You just get the feeling that someone out there is making such big money out of the gullibility of others—and that there are so many suckers all too willing to be victims of inconspicuous consumption just for the sake of being loved.

[In reality] against those text junkies who harass [us] with those messages that they want us to memorize in realize that they are actually spending good money to publicize their names to the civilized world? Or is it not [more] responsible to send a text reply screaming "Stop sending me those stupid forwarded messages because it is really about time you [get a life]"?

This, of course, is a perfect way to lose friends. But then, it'[s] the [only] act [to] restore the recovery of one's sanity and the proper way to use the cellular phone, a little [short] cut go a long, long way.

To receive forwarded messages so obviously pre-fabricated and possessing all the sincerity and seriousness of the literature found in skin whiteners is simply mind-boggling

BOOK launch guests Nikki Teodoro, Cynthia Villar, Sen. Bella Angara Castillo and Sen. Manny Villar

NEXT GENERATION Jessalen Alyanna Martinez, Dominique Cojuangco, Alissa Martinez and gorgeous Gretchen Barretto

BIRTHDAY duo Pops Fernandez and Junee San Diego with Lil Nimrods Marianne Pic, Laurie Jimenez Westfall and Meta Gozon

Christmas and birthdays

CHAMPAGNE and Cupcake Party of Leira Carpo at Cupcakes by Sonja at Serendra

MAKATI Shangri-La grand family: VP-GM Greg Dogan, Pilipy Wassner and GM Jurlaith Lynch

STAR columnist Jeanne Ramirez, Sen. Princess, Sen. Ed Angara and Gina Lopez

From page J1

costume and ready, as the saying goes, for life is bright.

Crown ball

There are gatherings and there are events, but when one only wants to "put out" there is only the capital "E" of the Tiara Ball!

Grand dame Shelle Abiera once again brings theme party-cum-lavish event and unbelievable setting to a new level. Never one to let her family and friends down, Shelle's much-awaited Birthday and Christmas Party this year was a Tiara Ball, beautifully announced with invites containing bejeweled tiaras. We guests truly had an excuse not to wear our Tallorod designer Oliver Tolentino-made not a flowing gown for the night, which was so burdened that I actually didn't need a tiara!

The Polo Club's ballroom was converted into a chateau with multilayered areas and fantastic murals. Feathers, mirrored balls and crystal adorned each table and a magnificent centerpiece hung over the dance floor. The setup was creatively done by her son Jun-Jun. He said he already has a warehouse full of props for any imaginable theme.

Just a week ago, Shelle's year-old grandson had a swinging '50s-theme birthday party. Again Jun-Jun was up to the task, decorating the affair with diner hulls, giant lipstick tubes and pastel tulips.

One of the Tiara Ball highlights was an awesome fireworks display from the Polo Field. The evening was clear as the lights magnificently illuminated then cascaded down. I almost shouted "Happy New Year!"

Gift list

Just a few days left before Christmas and my gift list is still languishing from inattention.

I should have shopped sooner at the festival of Trees last month. The annual charity ball of the Makati Garden Club is for the benefit of the numerous projects of the Philippine Institute for Social Progress. Chaired by ever-generous Maxine Pangilinan, the PISP not only donates funds but also people people to do livelihood to assist themselves.

The silent auction had several art pieces, holiday packages, Christmas decorations and lilly adorned Christmas trees. This year's affair had director Freddie Santos in charge of the production, which made for a jam-packed evening of fun.

Angara bio

Since I am so behind on gift preparations, I might just give everyone a copy fire. Ed Angara's book, "Story of Sea & Sierra." Based on the politically well-attended book launch, it must be an inspiring book, it says he has been written by National Artist Nick Joaquin, which by itself is all the more interested to read about Ed, whom I've only known passingly through his daughter Ana.

Brod Warner

The book might be the perfect gift for UBS CEO Simone Manning, who is one such Christmas + birthday celebrator. His 50th birthday will be extra-memorable this year because it is also a farewell celebration for this very amiable and energetic CEO.

After six years of guiding UBS to the top leagues of the banking giants, he and his lovely wife Julie will be moving to Australia at the end of this year. We will surely miss Simone both and can only hope the new captain will be just as warm and as generous as Warner has been.

All I can say is, "Warner, farewell, happy birthday, and Merry Christmas!"

E-mail the author at sagrimcan@inquirer.com.ph

NEWLY engaged Harriet Crespo and Collet Lopez with friends Tina Ocampo, Lulu Tan-Gan and Ricco Ocampo

ROYAL FAMILY Mark and Tessa Alduna, Louie and Mollie Alduna, Cuerina Reyes and Jun-Jun Alduna

GENEROUS PLOT CEO Maxine Pangilinan with Spanish Ambassador Ignacio Tagaz and Makati Garden's Marta Luisa Perez-Rubio

LIFE Mayor Vilma Santos

BIRTHDAY girl Leira Carpo and Cupcakes owner Sonja Ocampo

FORMER Chief Justice Art Panganiban and lovely wife Lesi

UNILEVER CEO Armand Belizo and wife Cristina

ELEGANT ladies Gloria Angara and Mita Rufino

GOOD-LOOKING couple Miguel and Barbara Abeleda

DASHING couple Rep. Sonny and Tootsy Angara

Sunday Crossword

PREMIER CROSSWORD! By Frank A. Longo — BOOBIES

answer on page H8

Auction raises funds for cancer society

BUTTERFLIES HELD AN AUCTION for the benefit of the Philippine Cancer Society during the recent launch of its Fall 2006 Collection at the Tower Plaza, Rockwell, Makati.

Auctioned off were necklaces from Mikaby Jewelry donated by Jacqui Dayrit-Boncan and sleepless bras from Sofia Trousseau and Philippine Bra from Sofy Thorsen of Rafael Jewelry.

Karen Calayan made the highest bid for the Officina del Tempo watch. Dr. Manny Calayan got the Technomarine watch while Ruth Vera successfully bid for the Mikaby necklace.

Cinderella Marketing Corp., exclusive distributor of Bridelinda in the country hosted the event.

FROM left, Cinderella's vice president for merchandising Robin C. Tanseco and marketing and communications director Walou de Venecia present a check representing proceeds from the auction to Philippine Cancer Society chair Dr. Roberto Palomo and executive director Dr. Minda Fajardo.

ONCE the passport is completed with the stamps, spice-mix, kids will receive special souvenirs like ribbons, bags, ID holders and more!

Celebrate Winnie the Pooh's 80th

POP Star Kids Sealtiel Fonacier, Bianca, Rita, Pat Seals, Jessica and Julia Anne celebrate 80 years of friendships and adventures with Pooh, Tigger and Eeyore at The Block SM North Edsa.

ALL SUPERSTARS AND TOY KINGDOM CELebrate Pooh and Friends: 80 Years of Friendship and Adventure.

Winnie the Pooh friends are invited to meet and greet the bear and his friends Dec. 8-12 at the Mall of Asia Music Hall and Dec. 15-16 at the Ali Mall Activity Center.

Every P500 purchase of Disney items at Toy Kingdom and ERI Department Store's Toy Depot, Character Shop, Children's Wear, Children's Shoes, Infant's Wear and Homeworld departments entitles a customer to a coupon that can be exchanged for a passport to enter Pooh's Bramford Acres Playground area.

Kids can collect stamps as they go through the different sections of the playground. They can visit Pooh's house and learn more about him and his friends and their fun and friendly adventures.

They can help tidy up Piglet's House by putting away the Disney toys and have a chance to win special prizes if they choose specially-marked ones.

Kids can also wear costumes of Winnie the Pooh, Tigger, Piglet and Eeyore, and have a monster picture taken at the Photo Op Area, or bounce and jump like Tigger at the Hundred Acre.

Storytelling sessions about Pooh and his adventures will also be held.

When a passport has been fully stamped, kids can receive special souvenir items as they leave the playground.

At the Tinsmane Area, kids can play games like Bible Bucin and Hot Honey Beat Onim with every purchase of one Pooh Collectible Scavenger at any Tinsmane outlet. Those who get 400-500 points at the Hot Honey Beat game can pick a prize.

Kids can also bring home special edition Pooh 80th Year commemorative items at bookscar SM Makati and SM Megamall. Items include stuffed toys, radio, pillows, caps, pen of hugs and ID holders.

Winnie the Pooh was a character created by British author A. A. Milne based on his son's fascination with his stuffed bear.

SOFT and huggable Winnie the Pooh stuffed toy

Holiday activities for the family

SMART PARENTING MAGAZINE offers parents some ideas on things to do with the young ones this holiday season.

Some of these activities include watching a

TRY THE TASTE OF NESTEA COOLNESS AT ₱2 LESS

NESTEA Lemon Green Tea ICE

Limited offer for Nestea Green Ice!
Only in supermarkets and convenience stores.

Bottled and distributed by The Coca-Cola System.

TIARA Bell host Malou Aninao and Helen Ong

December celebrators have to think of creative ways to lure friends into giving separate gifts

TIARA beauties Connie Guerzon and Mel Linares

HSBC Legaspi branch opening: Gigi Laurel, Warner Henning, branch manager Alma Briscia and deputy governor Chris Quiniguede

Christmas and birthdays

TESSA! *Tessa Prieto-Valdes*

BIRTHDAYS AND CHRISTMases are those momentous times when we all thrill at the prospect of receiving presents. Most of us enjoy this treat twice a year. The unfortunate ones are those born in December, who usually only receive one gift with a card saying, "Happy Birthday and Merry Christmas!"

December celebrators have to think of creative ways to lure friends into giving separate gifts. One sure-fire way is to host a birthday party, whether it be an intimate gathering, a highly entertaining event or a magnificently grand party worthy of kings. Whichever one chooses, bringing together family and friends is always a wonderful way of celebrating.

For her "Sweet 16!" birthday, stylista chic Leica Campo celebrated a Champagne and Cupcake Party with a Marie Antoinette theme. Dressed in her signature micro minis, Leica hosted an after-dinner affair for an intimate group in a little dessert shop called Cupcakery Serya (tel. 9984508).

Serving delicious, pretty cupcakes, the sweet-it quickly gaining fours...dear marketing phenomenon all entrepreneurs seek. One reason for the saved-of-mouth, word-of-a-blog fame is that Sonja herself oversees the production, taste and quality of her pastries, and really enjoys talking customers in her tiny but sweetly-designed shop.

Cupcakes it just one of the many growing establishments in Serendra, the serene, chill-out, hype-worthy destination in The Fort. The outdoor strip has a nice variety of full-range restaurants and shops like Gandi's, World of Sting Bleu and A Different Bookstore. It's wonderful that the dinner/party set now has added options for nighttime adventures.

For those celebrating milestones, however just doesn't cut it. Only an "event" will do.

In their 40s

Satisfying Pops Fernandez and tuner Antoni Sam Diego jointly-celebrated their "big 4-oh" with an all-out, entertaining party at Conway's in the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. The star-studded affair was filled with those in royalty, distinguished politicians and fabulous family and friends, all eager to help the long-time friends with their best wishes.

The high-energy event started with a toast to the birthday duo and continued with performances from some of the event's most beautiful sisters like May Bagot and Gris Villongco. To get the crowd into dancing gear, revelers from Steps Dance Studio of Stephen Zobel Bhattlib, noticed by smashing impersonators of 90s diva Diana Ross and overlooking Cher, got everyone on their feet.

By the time my disco-dance-savvy darling to the birthday cakes were rolled in and the guests showered in confetti. The dancing continued with Music Inc Band and music by DJ Conny Pugeat. Pops and Dave dashing from Armani Filiana danced until dawn.

Turning 40 has never looked so good as with these two best friends. Maybe Pops and Antoni are just surrounded with love and laughter because they truly looked thrilled.

CHRISTMAS II

"BIG PARTY Malou Aninao, Czarina A. Tayag with Gris Arienza

The St. Francis Towers at Shangri-La Place rises high in the city

The city is buzzing with excitement as the St. Francis Towers continues to rise at the heart of Mandaluyong. With units at the first tower almost sold out, the second tower was launched recently.

High-ceilinged and spacious

Your own private Shangri-La

Luxurious grand penthouses

A development of Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts' Kuok Group, the 60-storey St. Francis Towers is a techno connected residence, employing wireless fidelity facilities or WIFI. The development will have excellent leisure and recreation choices like a state-of-the-art clubhouse with a gym, aerobics room, steam room, adult and kiddie swimming pools, Jacuzzi, children's indoor and outdoor play areas. There will be a multi-purpose room and banquet facilities, a laundromat, 24/7 convenience store and concierge service.

The St. Francis Towers, the future crown jewel of Shangri-La Place, will be linked by a comfortable walkway to Edsa Shangri-La Hotel

Residents will have direct access to Shangri-La Plaza Mall and its over 400 stores and restaurants, the Shang Cineplex and the MRT Shaw station. They will also have direct access to Edsa Shangri-La Hotel and the world-famous Chi Spa through a comfortable link bridge. Exclusive services from the Hotel including outside catering, laundry and dry cleaning, car and limousine rental, reservations in Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts will also be available to them.

Residents will have direct access to Shangri-La Plaza Mall and its over 400 stores and restaurants and the MRT Shaw Station

Within stone's throw from reputable schools, top hospitals and the Wack-Wack Country Club, once completed, the St. Francis Towers will be the tallest residential condominium in the Philippines, thus adding more prestige to an already prominent community.

The St. Francis Towers model units are available for viewing at the showroom beside Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Shangri-La Place, EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard.

For more information, call 634-8080, 634-8111
Fax: 634-7756 or E-mail: *sales@thestfrancistowers.com*

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Bonnie G. Velarde

First RP Idol named tonight

THE FIRST "PHILIPPINE Idol" will be named tonight during a live telecast via ABC 5 from the Araneta Coliseum. The program starts at 9 p.m.

The final three contenders are theater actor Elmo Carlo Magdangal, band vocalist Mau Marcelo and employee Jan Jan Nieto.

Last night was the grand finale of the search that started in July. The face-off was held also at the Big Dome and telecast live on ABC 5. Public voting via phone and SMS commenced immediately after the finalists' performances and was to be unchanged for only two hours. Hence, the results were to have been tallied any before tonight's announcement.

Gian Carlo

He looks the part, sees the part and sings the part. So said the judges themselves in some past episodes of the competition.

But Gian could be never let that go to his head, and that he knew from the start that it was anybody's game.

Indeed, after landing twice in the bottom three, he had prepared a list of people to thank, fearing the next performance night would be his last.

From bottom dove to final three—Gian was not about to take chances. Interviewed early this week, he said, "I'm rooting for right here, finding time to exercise, and trying to control my voice as much as I can—like an athlete preparing for a major competition. I have to be in top form."

Of course his eye was always on the prize.

"I'm saving the best for last," Gian said. "I know that we're at the mercy of text voters. I'm just praying to reach the finals then and sway the votes in my favor."

More importantly, he said, he's happy that "God" led him to his true calling.

"I learned about warmth, patience and singing by an audience, not by myself."

Mau Marcelo

Rich no-cell phone of her own to read her voice with, extraordinary Yolanda Beyers reserved to passing and lighting candles for her grandaughter Mau or "Lovely."

"Love, if I had a phone, I wouldn't know how to use it," Beyers, a resident of a Laoreno City, told Inquirer Entertainment.

Mau is the youngest child of Beyers' departed daughter Teresita and Romulo Marcelo, an American citizen.

Beyers says Lovely's mother and father were this good singers.

"I know that in Philippine Idol," the Inquirer-ite thing is the singing voice, more than the looks," Beyers said. "But my grandchild has genes [voice], so, don't you think?"

Beyers' son Mau calls "Nong" and she organized the fact that she didn't have money to "fully support" her grandchild's quest.

"Think God, many people have been helping her," said Beyers. "Even in the market, the vendors keep telling me that they have been sending text votes for Mau.

Mau used to be known in her hometown as "Sarsuwela Queen," a name she made up so much her wardrobe of songs popularized by Filipino-American singers.

"We are happy with the turn of events," said Mau's stepsister Jocelyn Pagan. "She is confident she will be the lucky one."

Beyers' father, who works in a casino in Las Vegas, was set to arrive yesterday to watch his daughter perform.

Jan Nieto

"I have been rumbling only in the morning and early in the evening in preparation for the grand finale's performance night," Jan said in a phone interview on Friday. He admitted that he wasn't the "dark horse" in the competition.

"I also fight extra by doing jumping jacks and pushup challenge," he said.

He hadn't slept enough lately, he said, as he had been rehearsing the three songs he was to perform last night—"You That You Love Me," his personal choice; "Panty," the judges' choice; and "Evergreen," producer Sony BMG's choice.

Asked whom he considered his strongest rival, Jan said both Gian and Mau were hard to beat. "Also 'song coming from behind,'" he adds, laughing.

With a report from Joyce T. Morbo/ Inquirer Southern Luzon

GIAN CARLO MAGDANGAL

MAU MARCELO

JAN NIETO

Romero's film gets special A from CEB

By Dayanel San Diego Jr.

THE CEBUAN PALLADIUM AWARDS (CEB) has unanimously given the new digital movie directed by National Artist for Film Eddie Romero with a "special A" grade.

CEB chair Christine Jereza said the precedent-setting resolution signed by the board entitles Romero's "Banta ni Lore" a 100 percent automatic tax rebate and "full governance support."

"There is a significant part of Romero's Filmography and belongs to the national treasury," Dayrit said. She said the movie was also awarded as "the production investment chief" by the Film Fund. CEB said the Film Fund are both under the Film Development Council of the Philippines (FDCP).

The Film Fund has awarded Romero P3.8 million to blow up the digital material in Hemogenes for nationwide distribution, promotion and marketing, Jereza said.

This was confirmed by Romero. "We need P1.2 million for blowing. If the process of blowing it up," She plans to have at least 15 prints, or P90,000 each." He said the film will be blown up either here or in Thailand.

Play date moved

Because of this development, Romero decided to move the film's opening from Dec. 6 to late January 2010.

The new date also gives Romero a plenty of time to publicize the movie, named Dayrit. "We want to make sure it will be promoted well so that a lot of people will get to watch it" she said. "We are thinking of tie-ups with corporations and institutions. Perhaps the Department of Education and movie-appreciation culture can recommend it to students."

Romero initially received a P2-million grant from the National Commission for Cul-

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
A GOOD YEAR
HAPPY FEET
CASINO ROYALE
THE NATIVITY
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS

An 'enjoyable' film for Crowe

RUSSELL CROWE IS REUNITED WITH HIS friend, director Sir Ridley Scott, in "A Good Year," a man who gets to rediscover life amidst the beguiling beauty of the Luberon, a region of Provence in the south of France where he learns that life, like good wine, should be savored.

How did you and Ridley come to decide on this project?

After "Gladiator," everybody expected us to do something with freshers of blood and all that sort of stuff. This one reestablishes those expectations. It just lets people know that from a filmmaking perspective, we're not going to start making things for other people. We are going to do the thing we want to do.

Was it an enjoyable film to make?

It was lovely. I had a great time— the place is gorgeous. Living in a rural area that is so imminently farmed also comes with its own giant reward because you see how it all changes and unfolds from season to season. We got there in the middle of summer and you are surrounded by green vines and green vines, and two months later it's all dark reds and oranges and yellows.

Did you enjoy the physical comedy?

TAKE FIVE

RUSSELL Crowe in "A Good Year"

Yes, very much. The movie has references to Jacques Tati and Harold Lloyd and I love physicality in the performance that I really wanted to go with.

Rose's the family?

Absolutely great, thanks. My little boy Charlie is a delight and a wonder and now he has a lovely little baby brother to play with. Couldn't be better, thanks for asking.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 A GOOD YEAR
2 THE NATIVITY
3 HAPPY FEET
4 CASINO ROYALE
PREMIERE THEATRE
Catch the Cineplex Special
Tickets Price: P120.00
Wangs na Plaza

You decide who's watching the movie with you!
MyCinema, the country's one & only true private cinema

RICA PERALEJO ANGELICA PANGANIBAN AND GRETCHEN BARRETTO
MATAKOT KA SA
KARMA
JOSE JAVIER REYES
IN THEATRES DECEMBER 25, 2006

glorietta GREENBELT ROBINSONS TOWN AYALA CENTER CEBU Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS
G1 1 REYNA 2 THE NATIVITY 3 HAPPY FEET 4 BANDA ORA
G4 1 THE NATIVITY 2 BORAT 3 CASINO ROYALE 4 A GOOD YEAR 5 THE RETURN 6 HAPPY FEET 7 ALL THE KING'S MEN
GB1 1 HAPPY FEET 2 THE NATIVITY
GB3 1 A GOOD YEAR 2 HAPPY FEET 3 CASINO ROYALE 4 ALL THE KING'S MEN 5 THE NATIVITY
ATC 1 THE NATIVITY 2 A GOOD YEAR 3 HAPPY FEET 4 DECK THE HALLS 5 CASINO ROYALE
ACC 1 THE NATIVITY 2 HAPPY FEET 3 THE MARINE 4 REYNA
M2 1 REYNA 2 THE NATIVITY 3 A GOOD YEAR 4 HAPPY FEET 5 BANDA ORA

At the Activity Center
GLORIETTA
TOWN
AYALA CENTER CEBU
MARKET! MARKET!
Christmas Carols at One World String Orchestra
Christmas Jewellery Bazaar
Holiday Harmonies with the Philippine Madrigal Singers
Repertoire Philippines presents SOUND OF MUSIC
Watch RULES: LIFE ON THE TRACKS
A documentary by acclaimed Filipino director Gino Caralde

OPENS DECEMBER 13 EXCLUSIVELY AT GLORIETTA 4 & GREENBELT 3 CINEMAS
everyone pretend to be normal
LITTLE MISS SUNSHINE
ABIGAIL BRESLIN ALAN ARKIN
MTRCB Rating: Reminder G

DORA'S SING-ALONG FIESTA
Action Musical Showgirls Song Dolls
Big Real Children Real Helper Pal Fun
GLORIETTA
TOWN
ALABANG TOWN CENTER
AYALA CENTER CEBU
Activity Center
MARKET! MARKET!
www.cinemalia.com.ph

CHRISTOPHER de Leon with Angel Aquino, far left, and Juliana Palermo, left, in "Faces of Love."

Romero's film gets special A . . .

Pretransgrid B1

Inter-world Arts (WOAI).

"As a National Artist, I have a P1-million grant every year. I availed of my grants in 2005 and 2006 for this movie," he said.

The 63-year-old filmmaker said he was "very comfortable" moving from film to digital. "Digital technology made shooting much easier," he said.

"There was less equipment to lug around and setting up was much faster."

He also worked with young filmmakers on this project. Cinemalaya Best Director 2005 Rica Arevalo co-wrote the script with him. Assistant director is Borbi Villaluna, who co-directed the A-rated digital movie "Bangon."

The director's son, filmmaker Joey Romero, served as line producer, with Bobbie Tan of Strike Films as project consultant.

Described by GSS as "visionary dramedy, the literary and inspired film" stars Christopher de Leon, Angel Aquino, Juliana Palermo, Alfred Vargas, Glaiza Ramirez, Bembol Roco, Isabel Rivas, Wen Cruchada, Chinggay Alonso and Jackie Aquino.

WATCH THE SNEAK PREVIEW OF REGAL'S METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL ENTRIES TODAY AFTER SOP, 2:30P.M. AT GMA-7

WATCH THE SNEAK PREVIEW OF REGAL'S METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL ENTRIES TODAY AFTER SOP, 2:30P.M. AT GMA-7

WATCH THE SNEAK PREVIEW OF REGAL'S METRO MANILA FILM FESTIVAL ENTRIES TODAY AFTER SOP, 2:30P.M. AT GMA-7

'Casino Royale': Maximum Bond-age

By Oliver M. Palombardi
Contributor

While the casting of Daniel Craig as Agent 007 was met with skepticism not too long ago, his performance in "Casino Royale" is proof that the actor indeed has a future as iconic spy James Bond.

Craig, who has previously appeared in "Tomb Raider" and "Layer Cake," doesn't look at all like the more sophisticated, more upscale, up Sexier 007s. He's blond, has distracting cop-bustle cuts and mostly looks like a bully, but because the material gives him an edgy, contemporary roughness, he's just perfect for this outing.

This sixth actor to play Bond is convincing and a compelling presence, too, as he's able to show subtle hints that make him less cocky, more sympathetic. As we've seen a episode of numerous, hard-hitting TV and movie super-spies in recent years, "Casino Royale" does away with some of the smug, and extraneous 007's world has a more serious, more timely post-9/11 seriousness.

Arsenal discarded

The arsenal of high-tech gadgets has been discarded for now, although the technology shown here is much more realistic, and still very cutting-edge. The focus is mostly on Bond's spunky, back-to-basics approach to tracking down, or interacting with any that he must eventually take down, and he does that well with his more available resources.

That includes his ability to charm women; this new Bond does that well, too! Craig exhibits a severe, tough-guy appeal into him. He's paired with the equally intriguing Vesper Lynd (Eva Green from "Kingdom of Heaven"), a feisty, analytical civil service official tasked to accompany him during an undercover assignment that involves casino gambling. Green is just right; she's got sexiness to do, and the character's actions make her among the more interesting, more memorable Bond girls.

Speaking of the women in Bond's filmic life, Judi Dench is still delightful as the ever-infuriated M, as Bond's boss. she's regarding the agent's recent promotion, however

while tremendously promising, he has a tendency to recklessly go off on unsupervised missions. Still, Bond is undoubtedly the best agent for the job, and he's sent after a big villain; high-priority crook named Le Chiffre (Mads Mikkelsen). Bond engages the noir duct-impaired bad guy the wrapt blood, sometimes! in a poker game, which is not the film's densest, most distinguishing part. It's not the best way to explore his foe's villainy—he's mostly lacking in dimension for most of the movie—but Le Chiffre goes to do truly despicable things later during a torture scene, way.

"Casino Royale," directed by Martin Campbell ("Thirteen Lives," "Mask of Zorro"), thankfully remembers the super agent. And just like the latest installment of other long-lasting film franchises where actors playing the protagonist can be replaced, it rejuvenates the property anew for those who like their dessert, most distinguishing part. It's not the best way to explore his foe's villainy—he's mostly lacking in dimension for most of the movie—but Le Chiffre goes to do truly despicable things later during a torture scene, way.

"Casino Royale," directed by Martin Campbell ("Thirteen Lives," "Mask of Zorro"), thankfully remembers the super agent. And just like the latest installment of other long-lasting film franchises where actors playing the protagonist can be replaced, it rejuvenates the property anew for those who like their dessert, most distinguishing part. It's not the best way to explore his foe's villainy—he's mostly lacking in dimension for most of the movie—but Le Chiffre goes to do truly despicable things later during a torture scene, way.

NOW SHOWING
DISCOVER THE SECRETS FROM THE ANCIENT BOOK OF LOVE
KAMA SUTRA 3
Love Potion

THE #1 HORROR MOVIE IN MANILA!
THE STAR OF "THE GRUDGE" RETURNS
2ND WEEK
In 1981, a woman was brutally murdered. Now, she's reaching out from the grave to warn the next victim.
SARAH MICHELLE GELLAR
THE RETURN

SHOWN AT THE VATICAN AND WAS APPLAUDED SIX TIMES DURING THE SCREENING.
"A GREAT CINEMATIC EVENT."
–His Eminence Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican Secretary of State
"This is our answer to the BLASPHEMY [The Da Vinci Code] thrown at our faith..."
–His Eminence Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales
"Hooray for Holy-wood...the must-see movie this holiday season. And the unprecedented well-received Vatican premiere is the papal equivalent of TWO THUMBS UP."
–EDGE Magazine
"I'm not an emotional person, but when I finished watching it ... THE TEARS CAME DOWN MY CHEEK. I COULDN'T SPEAK."
–NEWSWEEK Magazine
"A DIVINE LOVE STORY comparable to those tearjerkers penned by NICOLAS SPARKS and ERICH SEGAL."
–VANITY FAIR Magazine
NEW LINE CINEMA presents
THE NATIVITY STORY
NOW SHOWING

ARANETA CENTER
Gateway MALL FarmersPlaza
ABSOLUTELY Christmas BAZAAR
The Season's best buys at bargain prices
Nov 9 to Jan 10 • All Mall
THE NATIVITY | A GOOD YEAR | ALL THE KING'S MEN
INANG YAYA | DECK THE HALLS | HAPPY FEET
KAMASUTRA 3 | CASINO ROYALE | REYNA | ALL THE KING'S MEN
MALL 5
1 INANG YAYA | 2 CASINO ROYALE | 3 THE NATIVITY
4 REYNA | 5 KAMASUTRA 3
CN LIVE ON STAGE
CARTOONIVAL
ARANETA COLISEUM

Oscar race heads into key week with critics awards

LOS ANGELES—HOLLYWOOD'S annual Oscar race heats up this week with a key group of US movie awards and nominations that is expected to narrow contenders for the world's top movie awards.

Little-seen films like "Half Nelson" with its star Ryan Gosling, "Babel" with Cate Blanchett and director Pedro Almodovar's "Volver" starring Penelope Cruz need strong showings this week to compete with Oscar-buzz front-runners.

"Dreamgirls," "The Departed" and "Little Miss Sunshine," "If one movie or one performance starts winning those (critics awards) regularly, that says to Academy members, 'we've got to take a look at this,'" said Tom O'Neil, columnist for awards-awaiting Web site, Thefilmcon.com.

The National Board of Review, a nearly 100-year-old group of film and other professionals, on Wednesday picks its top movies.

Following it are awards from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association and New York Film Critics Circle.

After those, come nominations from the Broadcast Film Critics Association, and on Dec. 14 the Hollywood Foreign Press Association names its widely watched Golden Globe Award nominees.

The Oscars are given out each year by the US-based Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and releases for 2006's movies still to be named on Feb. 25. Oscars bring prestige, bigger box office and greater DVD sales.

That year's race for best film Oscar was wide open until recent weeks when musical "Dreamgirls" and director Martin Scorsese's boxing hit, "The Departed," a crime drama, established first front-runner spots.

That pair is joined by quirky comedy "Little Miss Sunshine" and Britain's "The Queen," about Queen Elizabeth dealing with the crisis surrounding Princess Diana's death, as the likely contenders among the five nominees in some.

"For anybody else, it's up for grabs," said Pete Hammond, a film critic for Maxim magazine.

Mirren vs. Dench?

Oscar watchers are curious to see if "Babel," director Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu's look at cultural divisions, can overcome a mixed response among U.S. critics.

Similarly, director Almodovar's "Volver" has received critics' nod but only limited success at box offices, and Oscar voters like to see audiences turn out in droves for its award hopefuls.

Experts said "Volver" may likely yield a best actress nomination for its star Penelope Cruz, but the Spanish beauty needs a boost this week from critics to keep her in the race.

Overall, the best actress race is more wrangled than it has been in many years with Helen Mirren in "The Queen" and Dame Judi Dench for "Notes on a Scandal" taking early front-runner status alongside Kate Winslet in the dark drama "Little Children."

Reuters

The Beatles' . . .

From page K1

to this big, flowing showcase of the rock and roll greats' distinct talents. Fans from way back, as well as newer ones unfamiliar with the vinyl format, will be pleased that it gathers material from different eras in the band's discography and provides an altogether different listening experience. The Beatles' collective musical artistry is packaged more into a mass-have addendum that reflects the re-presentation and reinvention of their original recordings. Go get it, already.

'Inang Yaya' commands attention, respect and involvement

MARICEL SORIANO'S CURRENT STARRER, "Inang Yaya," is one of her best thespic showcases ever. For that powerpoint and finely-tuned, all production elevated by first-timer Pablo Biglang-Awa and Veronica Velasco for Unitel, Maricel drops most of her signature acting ticks, in favor of a simply but deeply felt portrayal of luminous, effecting and inspiring to behold.

In the family drama, Maricel plays the "Mommy Yaya" of spoiled, English-speaking Louise (Erika Oreta), the daughter of yuppie parents-to-be Sunshine Cruz and Jeffrey Legaspi.

There's often hate with work and social obligations, so Maricel has been their daughter's surrogate mom. Louise may be a holy terror, but she loves her nanny to bits.

Trouble is, Maricel has a daughter of her own to the province—Ruby (Lia Santos), who's being cared for by her grandmother (Marita Zobel), and aches for her mother's presence.

That's the film's central irony: Maricel is forced to earn money for her daughter by taking care of—and loving—somebody else's child, while her own daughter grows up without a mother.

Ironic, but true. Some meals are paid for, but there's a hole in her heart that nothing and nobody can fill—aside from her hardworking mother, who performs to emulate it.

It's a heart-as-old-as the movie hills, but "Inang Yaya" makes it organically painful by not going whole hog in the melodrama and manipulative department.

All of the movie's boring characters wear their pain on their sleeves, but they don't bore themselves—and the film embraces, inherits and lifts and buttresses with it. Such restraint is admirable and exceedingly rare to see on the local screen.

In any case, the emotionally unbearable situations changes when Maricel is forced to bring her daughter to live with her in her employers' home.

Also, the change is not necessarily for the better, as the two girls from both sides of the social divide clash and fight for Maricel's love.

Other problems to trouble and entertain, until the "inang yaya" doesn't know how else to divide herself up to please all of the people who demand her attention and affection.

Yes, the maker the "right" duration in the end, but only after so much struggle and strife, and the viewer suffers and learns along with her.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

It is one of Maricel's best thespic showcases ever

This is Maricel's movie, but inventingly enough, Jonathene Cruz also comes on strong in this production. And the two new child actresses who play Louise and Ruby earn in absolutely pitch-perfect performances.

The bad, sadly, are but few, some film awards time, they'll win a slew of trophies as an ensemble act—together!

Beyond excellent performances, however, "Inang Yaya" commands attention, respect and involvement as one of the best films of 2006.

Do yourself a favor and watch it now—among other beneficial effects, it will help restore your admiration for Filipino films.

'Hoo-Shoo'

THE UK Cinemaworld leads the stellar cast of "Mr. Shoo: The Water Giant," the latest film by John Bendebtran, whose past movies include "Look Mma," "The Homecomer" and "Two Shoo Taken to Nha."

In the new film, a young boy is devastated when his perfect vacation with his father is cancelled due to an emergency salvage mission a remote Canadian lake.

When he discovers that the lake is known as the home of a mythical creature, Mm makes it his mission to prove that the myth is based on fact.

Forging a connection with the creature is easier for Mm than getting his father's attention—until both souls and heart need all the help they can get.

SPIN CITY

JOSE MARI CHAN

Double Diamond

JOSE MARI CHAN will be given a Double Diamond Record Award for his "Christmas in Our Hearts" album. It has several favorite's today on GMA TV Sunday sweetener show, "SOP." With more than 600,000 units sold, "Christmas in Our Hearts" is the biggest selling OPM Christmas album of all time.

The Beatles' 'Love' everlasting

By Oliver M. Palomboch
Contributor

PRODUCER George Martin and his son Giles

THE BEATLES LIVE ANEW WITH THE CREative remastication of their songs in the new album "Love," which builds bases over new mixes into superlion into a lively review of Cirque Du Soleil's Beatles-themed show. "Love" remixes a carefully chosen set woven, lively "frained, longtime producer George Martin and his son Giles were tapped to work on the project, and they were encouraged by the surviving band members to be as adventurous as they possibly can could.

It's designed to accompany the Cirque acrobatics and colorful dance performances, but the album definitely sounds on its own. It's probably the closest thing to how a live performance by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr might sound today, as the Marxists cleverly executed refurbishing of the classic material has elements of recordings that are now over 40 years old. The voices and instruments seem magnified to a point that they're very close and intimate, while layered enough to have that studio-mixed touch and simplicity, adding to that to a contemporary vibe, as the instrumentations and sampling from other Beatles songs are smoothly meshed into the digitally remastered and remixed tracks.

A cappella

The soothing a cappella harmonies of "Because," for instance, are followed by the uprising riff of "A Hard Day's Night," which soon playfully veers into the actual, full-length song "Get Back." The next tune, "Glass Onion," segues hauntingly to the strings, searing "Eleanor Rigby." The transitions are generally smooth, and pauses between "acts" are abrupt and barely noticeable. The melding of elements from different sources also works clearly, especially in "Drive My Car/The Word/What You're Doing," and the conjoined "Blackbird" and "Yesterday." "Love" explores this compatibility in bossa, vocal tracks and melodic arrangements in the other pieces, and combines them into a cohesive whole.

Distinguished

The fun, sometimes, is in figuring out where specific pre-existent components like bass lines and such were gleaned from. The lyrical moment's stories of the featured songs seem fleeting remain intact and atmospheric, the abstract imagery of "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" and "Strawberry Fields Forever" still work well for this recording. "Here Comes the Sun," "Hey Jude" and other fan favorites remain as vocal, emotionally pumped and melodically pleasing as ever, their alterations only causing mostly to either draw beginning or endpoints.

The millennial, distinguished band's "Love" treatment needs to be listened to as a whole and in sequence, as it's constructed to

THE DAILY PLANET

ENTERTAINMENT

WILL Smith and wife Jada at New York party for "The Pursuit of Happyness"

Cruise a surprise guest at 'Devil Wears Prada' party in LA

Will Smith's son steals the show ... Jane Seymour is caught up in Pacquiao fever

LOS ANGELES—CLEO WEO SHOWED UP at the party last Tuesday evening to toast the success of "The Devil Wears Prada," which has become one of the year's biggest comedy hits!

So, not the devil, but newlywed Tom Cruise. The superstar, fresh from his honeymoon, planted himself in the living room, right by the front door, in the home of hosts Jessica and Tom Sothman, co-chairs of Fox Filmed Entertainment. The actor gushed about his baby girl Suri ("Beautiful") and said as he could stay only for an hour because he wanted to be back home in time to tuck in his baby girl.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Rahren V. Nepales

"The Devil" star, Meryl Streep, enchanted the couture look that her deliciously sinister fashion editor character would wear to a party like this (Lights by Oli. See Below Re- more about him below). Instead, Meryl wore a comfortable-looking black blouse and pants and sported that relaxed look with

planet and no make-up.

He told the great actress that we normally don't watch movies on the plane but when "The Devil" came on during our recent flight, we couldn't help but grab the headphones and watch her boss from hell Miranda Priestly (Big Bird is Anne Hathaway's character) again. She broke into that glorious Meryl Streep laughter and said that her friends told her the same thing. "But I speak so softly that when I talk onscreen, all you hear is hiss, hiss, hiss."

Not quite, Ms Meryl. On the plane, we still relished the way she fully dissed or bored to discomfort, "That's all."

Some new faces, too, looking lovely as usual, such as was Emily Blunt, Meryl's other assistant in the film. Emily, whose eyes are as beautiful and soulful as their on- screen, said she was going straight from the party to shoot a scene for her next film.

He also bumped into Stanley Tucci, Meryl's right hand man in the movie, who graciously acknowledged our kudos for his performance in the movie.

Quick-change artist

Cate Blanchett, whom we interviewed earlier in the day for her film with George Clooney, "The Good German," shared that she was leaving that night so he suits her kids again in her native Australia. She was a quick-change artist—she wore a stunning Armani dress in our press con and afterwards, we saw her climb aboard an SUV in jeans. As the party, she wore that dramatic outfit with a bow in the back again.

Speaking of "The Good German" (It's shot in the 1940s, black-and-white-style, with Cate evoking Marlene Dietrich and all those glamorous screen-sirens of that era), there are several almost-but-arguable movie titles these days. Aside from "The Good German," there are Russell Crowe's "The Good Year" and Matt Damon's "The Good Shepherd." (Matt is excellent in the film about the origins of the CIA). So the Hollywood jobs there days is, "Have you seen 'The Good Year of the Good

(PAGE 12)

IMAGING

Flowers are offered before a large portrait of John Lennon at the John Lennon Museum in Saitama City, suburban Tokyo on Friday to commemorate the former Beatle's murder on Dec. 8, 1980 in New York. The museum was built with the support of Lennon's Japanese widow Yoko Ono.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SUNDAY CINEPLEX

Robinsons Galleria

Greenhills Cinemas

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Metro East

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Novaliches

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Manila

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Ortigas

Cinema 2000 Shangri-La

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Galleria

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Antipolo

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Pioneer

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Manila

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Galleria

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Ortigas

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Metro East

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Novaliches

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Pioneer

Cinema 2000 Robinsons Place Antipolo

Cinema 2000 Shangri-La

ROUNDUP

Cinemanila landing

The Cinemanila International Film Festival Foundation and the Movie Workers Welfare Foundation, Inc. received P1 million each in assistance from the President's Social Fund.

The assistance was turned over by Secretary Ces Oreta to officials of the Presidential Management Staff to Cinemanila festival director Amable "Tikoy" Aguiluz IV and Showbiz Inquisitor Rambelino Lasa.

The support covers payment for the operational expenses in the 4th Cinemanila International Film Festival last month and the social welfare projects of Showbiz Inquisitor.

'Penguin Baywatch'

"Penguin Baywatch...Antarctica" premieres tonight at 9 on Animal Planet and encore tomorrow at 11 p.m.

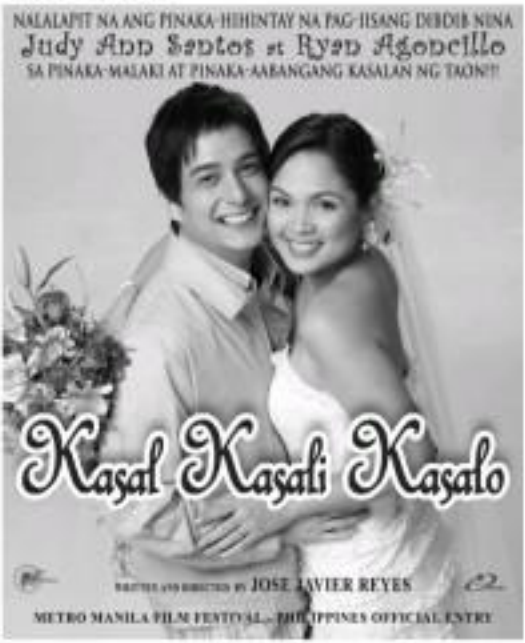
The show features the penguins' survival antics in the predatory waters, escaping the lethal grip of hunting leopard seals, as they attempt to reunite with their mates.

Carell comedy

Steve Carell follows up his "The 40-Year-Old Virgin" hit with the March/April's quirky family comedy "Little Miss Sunshine."

Carell plays Frank, who recently attempted suicide after a downward spiral that began with a mixture of unrequited love and losing his self-proclaimed position as America's pre-eminent Proust scholar.

"Sunshine" will be shown exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas—Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3—starting Dec. 13.



Fairytale weddings, toxic divorces—show biz as usual

JENNIFER Aniston and Vince Vaughn

RUSHES

JENNIFER ANISTON AND VINCE MCTUALLY agreed to end their relationship but continue to be good friends today" —Representatives Stephen Aronson and John Picard, confirming that Hollywood couple Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn have called it quits.

"Now you're being personal/cause because we're not together anymore/ And I don't know whom child that is until it comes out and has a blood test. You shouldn't jump to conclusions, sir." — Eddie Murphy, responding to a TV interviewer who asked him whether he was excited that his ex-girlfriend, former Spice Girl Melanie Brown, was pregnant.

"I was interviewed [by] what Eddie said. There is absolutely no question that Eddie is the father." —former Spice Girl Melanie Brown, on Eddie Murphy's remarks that he's not sure if he's the father of her unborn child.

"I wasn't happy with the 80th one. I think this one is real satisfying for the people who like Rocky." —Sylvester Stallone, on the latest edition of the Rocky franchise, "Rocky Balboa."

"Every movie I make at this point has been magnified more than I expected, and I probably did take my emotional freedom a little too for granted. Thank God for Victoria's Secret's new underwear liner!" —Britney Spears, recapping on her website.

"I am good, I am great, you know... just moving along, progressing and taking it all in stride." —Kevin Federline, on the demise of his marriage to Britney Spears.

Planet celeb in 2006

LOS ANGELES—Surprise arrest, drugs, acrimonious divorces and regular brushes with the forces of law and order. It was those business as usual for the inhabitants of planet celebrity in 2006.

As the year drew to a close, Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes put the seal on their whirlwind 18-month romance by tying the knot in a lavish ceremony held in a castle in Italy in front of a star-studded guest list.

Cruise's nuptials came barely five months after his ex-wife of 11 years Nicole Kidman said "I do" with country singer Keith Urban, with the couple getting hitched at a beachside ceremony in Sydney. Six weeks months

KATIE Holmes, Tom Cruise and Suri

they were having the first crisis of their marriage, Urban entering rehab at an undisclosed location in October.

While Cruise and Kidman were celebrating their new marriages, a flood of celebrities were settling in the lawyers as their unions reached the end of the road.

Ex-Beatle Paul McCartney and teen idol Britney Spears both began divorce proceedings from their respective spouses, Heather Mills and Kevin Federline.

With no pre-nuptial agreement in place, Mills could look back at McCartney's 825-million pound ($1.57 billion) fortune although analysts have cast doubt on her chances of winning a multi-million dollar payout.

There were no such concerns for Spears, who was reported to be prepared to sign "straw-thin" pre-nuptial agreement that will protect her from making a big payout to Federline, a man whom she filed for divorce in November.

The bombshell came two months after Federline's second child, and ground two years after they were married.

Other celebrities whose marriages hit the skids this year included "Baywatch" sex symbol Pamela Anderson, who filed for divorce from musician Kid Rock in November, a full four months after their wedding.

Oscar-winning actress Gwen Stefani's seven-year marriage to Pretty Philippe also broke down, as did the marriage of another hot actress Oscar winner, Hilary Swank, who split from husband Chad Lowe.

Real-live Whitney Houston's marriage to Bobby Brown became another victim of the "curse of reality television" when the couple announced their separation.

CYNTHIA Nixon and Christine Marinoni

Nixon, of Sex and the City fame, announced her split from Marinoni, the mother of her twin children, in September.

Other celebrities who split in 2006 included Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner, Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz, Ja Rule and Aisha Atkins, Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey, Mariah Carey and Nick Cannon, Jessica Alba and Cash Warren, Jennifer Lopez and Cris Judd, Ludacris and Tamika Ludacris Bridges, Jessica Biel and Justin Timberlake, Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore, Jude Law and Sadie Frost, Kelly Ripa and Mark Consuelos, Ben Stiller and Christine Taylor, Jon Bon Jovi and Dorothea Hurley, Tim McGraw and Faith Hill, Kelsey Grammer and Camille Grammer, Ray Liotta and Michelle Grace, Jon Gosselin and Kate Gosselin, Dennis Quaid and Meg Ryan, Jeff Bridges and Susan Geston, Ralph Fiennes and Francesca Annis, Jeff Goldblum and Geena Davis, Ben Affleck and Jennifer Lopez

DAVID LETTERMAN

Letterman CBS deal extended

NEW YORK—LATE-NIGHT TV COMEDIAN David Letterman extended his contract with the CBS network on Monday in a deal that will keep him hosting the network's "Late Show" through the fall of 2010, a year past the retirement of his NBC rival Jay Leno.

"I'm thrilled on be vascinating on at CBS," Letterman, 59, said in a statement.

Letterman, who began his network TV career on NBC, marked his 13th year in "Late Show" on Aug. 30 this year and will celebrate 25 years in late-night comedy this February.

The CBS "Late Show with David Letterman," averaging 4.3 million viewers per show this season, has generally ranked second in the late-night TV ratings wars behind NBC's rival program "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno."

Leno drawn an audience of 5.3 million.

Letterman hosted his original show, "Late Night," on NBC in the time slot following "The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson" and was long considered a likely successor to Carson.

But when Carson retired in 1992 after nearly 30 years on "The Tonight Show," he was replaced by Leno. The following year, Letterman jumped to CBS in the flagship 11:30 p.m. time slot opposite Leno, setting up one of the most storied rivalries on TV television.

Reuters

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

CINEMA ACCESS
635-5555
FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 CASINO ROYALE • TBR
2 HAPPY FEET
3 KAMA SUTRA 3
4 THE NATIVITY STORY
5 A GOOD YEAR
6 Reserved for VICTORY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
7 REYNA
8 BORAT
9 DECK THE HALLS
10 THE RETURN

ERMITA

1 THE NATIVITY STORY
2 A GOOD YEAR
3 HAPPY FEET
4 CASINO ROYALE
5 THE RETURN
6 REYNA
7 A GOOD YEAR

METRO EAST

1 THE RETURN
2 HAPPY FEET
3 A GOOD YEAR
4 THE NATIVITY STORY
5 FRAGILE
6 KAMA SUTRA 3
7 CASINO ROYALE
8 REYNA

NOVALICHES

1 KAMA SUTRA 2
2 A GOOD YEAR
3 REYNA
4 HAPPY FEET

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 REYNA
2 BAHAG TWIN
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER

1 THE NATIVITY STORY
2 HAPPY FEET
3 REYNA
4 A GOOD YEAR

STA. ROSA

1 THE MARINE
2 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
3 REYNA
4 HAPPY FEET

LIPA

1 FLAGS OF OUR FATHERS
2 FEAST
3 BORAT
4 REYNA

DASMARINAS

1 DECK THE HALLS
2 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
3 REYNA
4 HAPPY FEET

ANGELES

1 FRAGILE
2 KALELDO
3 REYNA
4 BORAT

IMUS

1 HAPPY FEET
2 A GOOD YEAR
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 REYNA

STARMILLS

1 HAPPY FEET
2 KALELDO
3 REYNA
4 BORAT
5 SANTA CLAUSE 3
6 FRAGILE

BACOLOD

1 HAPPY FEET
2 EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH
3 CASINO ROYALE
4 ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
5 REYNA
6 BOA

ILOILO

1 SANTA CLAUSE 3
2 THE NATIVITY STORY
3 HAPPY FEET
4 REYNA

Cruise a surprise guest at 'Devil Wears Prada' party

From page 11

dcast that he no longer does party design work but he is now concentrating on creating lights as Hollywood parties and other events. Brian decked the firehouse home and its sprawling grounds with thousands of miniature lights which added to the festive ambience, especially in the backyard where diner-style tables and benches sat more than 50 for friends, Florist Kevin Lee scattered all over.

Father and son

Speaking of parties (the holidays are indeed here), among the events we attended last weekend in New York was a party for **Will Smith**'s "The Pursuit of Happyness" (yes, the misspelling is intentional). As the movie posted, a toast lively playfully to demonstrate his "reverence" for the film's star.

So, the toast did not dissed father Will but for the actor's son, Jaden Christopher Syne Smith, 8, who gives a star-making performance in "The Pursuit of Happyness." Dissed father Will explained to Jaden what "gross" means, reminding him that it's also what people do to murders. Then Will kissed, too, to get his point across.

Father and son play, well, father and son in the movie adaptation of Chris Gardner's memoir of the same name which chronicles his true-to-life journey as a homeless man with a son to take care of in San Francisco. Columbia Pictures threw a party at the Four Seasons restaurant last weekend to celebrate the film, which was directed by Italian Gabriele Muccino, and its award nomination-worthy performances.

"Would you like a martini?" a lady publicist asked to Jaden when he came in ahead of his famous parents (mother, of course, is actress Jada Pinkett Smith). The boy absolutely handsome (has to dad looks), Will), was actually dressed in a man and he just like when we interviewed him in his very first press encounter in LA.

"Your man has his own table with his own name on it," I told Will when he came in from a special screening of the film. As Jaden took a hearty laughter, "I'm warm to do comedy," a beaming Jada told me as Jaden made normal any moves beside us. "As said, no more heavy stuff." Jaden will make many moviegoers cry when they see him and his dad struggle with homelessness. It soon where they said refuge and sleep in a subway bathroom is found to bring out Kleenex tissues.

Although we know that Thandie Newton (who plays a fictionalized version of the mother of Jaden's character) was born in England, it was still surprising to hear her speak with a British accent. She has been completely believable as an American in the movie and the Oscar-winning "Crash." The Cambridge-educated actress said she is paired with Eddie Murphy in the coming comedy "Norbit."

Chris Gardner, whose life from a homeless man to a millionaire stockbroker started this all, stood regal and dapper in the crowd. His favorite anecdote from him was that when he was a little tentative about Will playing him, his daughter said, "Dad, if Will can play Al, he can play you."

Jaden will make moviegoers cry when they see him and dad Will Smith struggle in the movie

In his own table, Jaden and another boy nonchalantly played with their respective video games as the guests mingled. Japanese actress and a sensation in "Babel," Rinko Kikuchi, rocked braids with her new blonde hair color and Karl Lagerfeld for Chanel dress (we were surprised to hear Kikuchi like "Babel" has not yet been shown in Japan!), Broadway star Bernadette Peters, Eva Mendes and her trademark locks on the left cheek, Michael Mann, one of our favorite filmmakers, Terrence Howard and his son, who is also an actor (someday title boy and Jaden will rule Hollywood), and actor Rob MacLachlan.

A bartender, who is a dead ringer for Tom Hanks, quipped that he should be ordering drinks, not making them as we spoke. Michael Mann and Oscar-winning songwriter Gloria Goldeman ("A Beautiful Mind"), who are co-producing Will's next film, closed the bar.

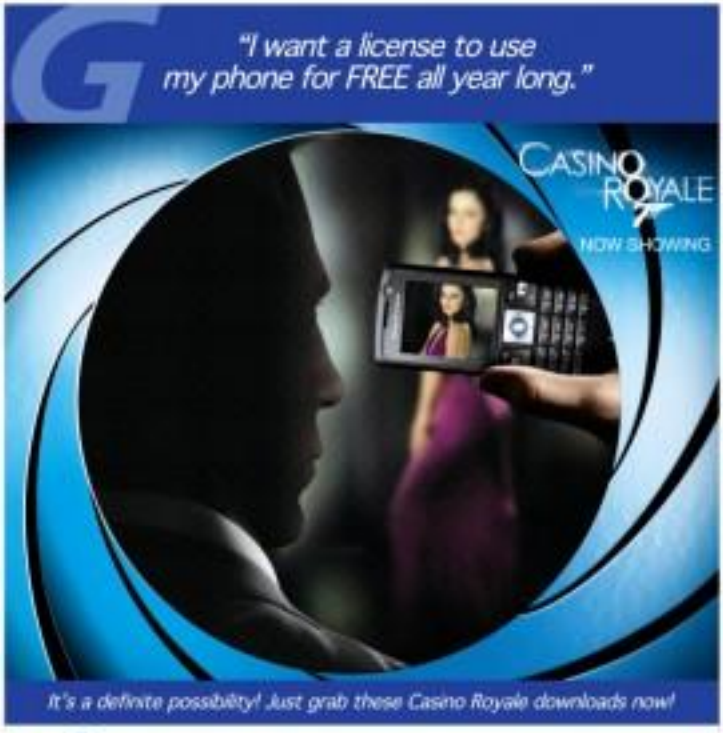
TYANNIE NEWTON

Rated 'R'

A footnote to this awards season: Kudos to Tony Kushner and Lisner for the critical success of "Saving Tessa," which earned his clients their fourth consecutive at eating from the Golden Globes. Following "Crying Ladies," "Gunna Insist" and "La Vita Lorca". There was no Philippine entry to the Oscars' Best Foreign Language film (too late you so we can say this is Lisner's second consecutive year with "The Mourning of Maximo Oliveros," after "Crying Ladies" two years ago.

And since Lisner's the Philippine distributor for "Caesha," it's also the film outfit's consecutive year at the Independent Spirit awards, with the nomination of "Manoro" for Best Foreign Language Film. In that category of four nominees (a director's award), says of the films don't have distributors yet, but United's "Mariano" a competing against Tony Clarke's "The Lives of Others" and The Weinstein Company's "Days of Glory." It's heartening to see that Philippine Cinema can now compete against the American indie's big guns! It would be great if our filmmakers and distributors can get into this habit more often.

E-mail the columnist at tvinquirer_5000@yahoo.com

TERRENCE Howard and son Hunter

QUEEN Latifah arrives at the salute to Will Smith.